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THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS.

ANTIPAS, SON OF CHUZA

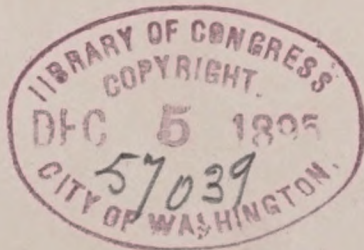
AND OTHERS

WHOM JESUS LOVED

BY

LOUISE SEYMOUR HOUGHTON

“Except ye be converted and become as little children ye cannot
enter into the kingdom of heaven”



NEW YORK

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PRESS OF
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NEW YORK

TO

MY DEAR FRIEND

MRS. GEORGE WOOD

THROUGH WHOSE EYES I HAVE SEEN

THE HOLY LAND

AND WITH WHOM, IN SPIRIT

I HAVE WALKED IN THE LORD'S FOOTSTEPS

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

INTRODUCTION.

IN the story which follows I have tried to show the real nature of the Messianic hope held by the various classes from which our Lord's followers were drawn,—the devout, the worldly, the patriots, the ecclesiastical party,—and to trace the gradual change in the views of those who loved him, as his life and teachings led them more and more near to a true apprehension of his Messianic calling.

That nearly all the principal characters are children does not argue that the story was written for children only. Its deepest meaning is indeed for their elders, and the key to it lies in the motto on the title-page. For the experience of Antipas and Bar-joses and little Janna, and the experience also of the elder followers of the Lord, as I have tried to discern it in the Gospel story and reproduce it here, goes to show that only the childlike spirit, unpreoccupied with notions of what the Messiah ought to be or to teach, could frankly accept Jesus at his own valuation and enter without hindrance into his Kingdom. And herein lies a parable of all truth.

L S. H.

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NOTE.—It should be observed that with two exceptions these are modern pictures representing the scenes as they appear at the present time.

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ANTIPAS, SON OF CHUZA.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE LORD DWELT IN NAZARETH AMONG HIS FRIENDS
AND KINDRED.

A LITTLE child was playing in the sun before the door. He was short and sturdy; his black curls clustered thick on his head; his large, dark eyes were full of merriment. He was never for an instant still, but always running to and fro on his little brown bare legs, gathering blocks and bits of wood in the front of his tunic and piling them up with eager industry, now into the form of a long, low house, uneven enough from the roughness of the blocks, and now into a tall tower, which, lop-sided from the misshapen material, was sure to tumble down before it was half finished.

The house before which he played was hardly less simple than those which he was building. It was of only one story, and contained but a single room, clay-floored and lighted by a small latticed opening. Outside the door a rude, ladder-like stair led up to the flat roof, where flowers were blooming in red earthen jars that stood on the broad parapet. In one corner a small

room had been built; it was almost covered by a great vine which, growing at one angle of the house, overspread two of its sides, flaunting its tendrils above the roof of the "upper room."

Down below in the doorway of the house sat a woman sewing. She was simply dressed in a sort of robe or gown of a coarse blue woolen stuff. Her feet were bare, but on her head she wore a short white veil, which, nearly hiding her hair, was drawn together under her chin, leaving her face uncovered. There was an air of dignity in the set of her head upon her shoulders that would have made her seem almost stern if it had not been for the expression in her eyes, a sort of gentle amazement, of sweet surprise, as if she had lately seen something beautiful but most wonderful. The expression deepened as she looked up from her needle and smiled into the face of a young man who was working at a carpenter's bench under the shade of a sycamore tree that grew before the door. He caught his mother's glance and smiled back at her without speaking, but with an expression of love so tender that her eyes grew moist as she turned to her needle with a soft sigh of content.

The son so dear to this mother was a man of about thirty, tall and slender, yet with a figure so lithe and well-knit that it gave an expression of exceeding strength. He wore only a coarse brown tunic reaching to his feet, though his upper robe of blue, with a twisted cord or tassel at the corners, lay on the farther end of the bench. His hair was covered with a brown kerchief

bound about his head with a yellow cord and flowing back over his shoulders. He wore his beard long but trimmed away from his mouth, which was firm and strong and beautifully formed. There was that in his countenance, especially in his eyes, that made you look again, a lofty expression of inward joy that seemed almost to bear him up above the earth. It was not as of pleasure at anything present; the joy seemed to come from within. When he smiled upon his mother you would have said that his smile was the very embodiment of love, but when he turned back to his work again his face became nobly serious, yet always with a look as if he saw something in common things that others did not see.

The block tower fell again and the little boy uttered an expression of fretful impatience.

"What is it, Janna, child?" asked the woman in gentle tones.

"The temple will not stand, mother Mary," replied the boy. "I am building a great, great temple like that my father told me of, at Jerusalem; but whenever I get ready to put on the highest roof it falls. And I'm so tired," he added fretfully.

The young man at the carpenter's bench laid down his plane and looked toward the west.

"The sun is going down," he said. "It will soon be time for my brothers to come home for supper. Little Janna, will you come to the upper chamber with me to see the sun set?" He stretched out his arms, and the child, forgetting his fretfulness, leaped across the pile of

fallen blocks and sprang into the strong embrace. The young man lifted the boy, and perching him on his shoulder climbed the ladder stair, smiling down as he went at his mother, who had folded up her work.

She had begun her simple preparations for the evening meal when a quick step was heard and a young woman came around the corner of the house. She too wore a blue robe, but it was half covered with a brown mantle, and her feet were shod with sandals. She looked tired, but her face lighted when her eyes met Mary's, and she said in a serious tone, "Peace be to all in this house."

"And to you and yours be peace," Mary replied. Then, answering the searching glance that even while she spoke the younger woman cast around the place before the door and into the dark room, she added :

"Your little Janna has been a good child all day, Ruth. He has had enough to keep him busy, now playing at cornfields with the shavings and again building houses and temples with the blocks. Just now he began to get tired and fretful, and my Jesus has carried him to the upper chamber to see the sun go down."

"And to tell him one of his beautiful tales, no doubt," added the younger woman. "He is so patient and tender with the children ! But I will go up, Mary, and bring Janna down ; our supper is ready and Ezra is very weary with the day's work. Even with my help in carrying his pack he can hardly make his rounds," she added anxiously.

"May the God of Jacob be his strength !" said Mary,

with an earnestness so deep that to Ruth it seemed like a promise.

Ruth's foot was already on the lower step of the rude stair, and she went softly up; but at the top she stood still under the shadow of the sycamore tree.

For the picture that she saw before her made her mother-heart thrill and her eyes fill with tears of a pleasure that was half awe. On the edge of the broad parapet sat the young man with her child leaning against his knee and looking intently into his face. The sun had just gone down behind the hills, its golden rays shot up over half the sky and seemed to transfigure his whole person as he gazed with a look of tenderness into the child's uplifted eyes. He was speaking softly, but as the young mother reached the top of the stair he paused a moment as if in thought.

"Tell me the rest, please," said little Janna in his fresh young voice. "What did the good shepherd do when he found the little lamb that had strayed away from him?"

"He laid it on his shoulders rejoicing," said the young man, taking the child's hand and looking seriously on the little up-turned face. "And when he came home he called together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.'"

"Because he was so glad to find the naughty little sheep?" asked Janna, his eyes very earnest now.

The young man softly patted the little hand that lay within his own, but his gaze was lifted to the sky again,

and he said, rather to himself than to Janna, "Even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repents." The child looked puzzled, then reverting to the words he had understood he said, "You carried me up the stair on your shoulder, dear Jesus, just as the shepherd carried the little lamb. Am I your little lamb?"

Jesus only smiled his answer, for at that moment the child caught sight of his mother and ran toward her with a glad cry. She had been gone from him all day, and a day is a long time for a boy of five to be away from his mother. Yet as she let him down from her arms after a close embrace, and took his hand to lead him down the stair, he looked back toward the parapet where the young man still sat.

"I would like to stay with Jesus, too," he said, pulling his hand away from his mother's. "Can't we come here and live with Jesus and Mary and all the others? I don't want to go home to our house. It isn't nice like this."

His voice had the fretful sound of a little boy who has been playing hard all day and is tired and sleepy. But he caught the glance of Jesus' eyes, a look very loving and yet very full of command. The cloud cleared away from the little face; he took his mother's hand; his voice grew sweet and fresh again.

"Good-night, dear Jesus," he said. "I'll go home with mother now and come again to-morrow to see you."

CHAPTER II.

HOW THE LORD LEFT HIS HOME AT THE CALL OF THE PROPHET.

LITTLE JANNA had not been quite correct in saying that his own house was not as nice as that of Jesus. From his point of view, however, perhaps it was not, for there was no carpenter's bench before the door and none of that litter of blocks and shavings that a child so delights in.

Janna's home was one of four low-roofed houses built around a court which you entered by a narrow, tunnel-like alley. There were chickens strutting about the court, clothes flapping from lines stretched overhead, and great water-jars standing against the stuccoed house walls, and before one of the doors some glowing coals in a brazier. And in one corner there was a broad spreading fig-tree that made a shady place for the children to play on hot afternoons. Now the various families were taking their suppers from low tables set before their house doors, but before Janna's door there was only a great pack of costly stuffs that his father, Ezra, had bought of a trader from Damascus. Within the house there was a candle burning, and the low table was drawn up to the raised bench, or divan, that ran all around the room. A man was lying on the divan in an attitude of great weariness, but he raised his head and

stretched out his arms when little Janna ran toward him with a cry of delight.

The mother brought a bowl of smoking lentiles from the brazier in the court, and then mother and son stood with bowed heads while the father rose and, covering his head with the skirt of his tallith or outer robe, reverently pronounced the grace before meat. Then they all sat down, and the father, tearing off a strip from the thin loaf of bread that lay before him, rolled it into a sort of horn and, scooping up some of the lentiles, handed the "sop" to the child.

"And what has my son been doing all day?" he presently asked.

"I have been playing at Jesus' house," answered Janna. "I like to play there, father; there are nice blocks and shavings. And I like Jesus, too."

"He told you a pretty story to-night," observed the mother.

"He often tells me stories, mother; he tells them to all the children."

"I think there never was any one so good to children," said Ruth to her husband. "They all love him and flock around him wherever he goes."

"I have seen them following him about the market place," replied the father. "But, Ruth, you should not let Janna be a burden to Jesus. He is but a little fellow, you know, and might easily be in the way."

"I don't think Jesus finds him so, Ezra," replied Ruth, and little Janna, looking up from his supper with eyes round with surprise, said :

"I don't trouble Jesus, father. Why, he loves me!"

The father smiled indulgently as he rose and gave the signal for returning thanks. And then Ruth went about her household tasks, with Janna following after her, as little boys are wont to do.

"What was the story Jesus told you, Janna?" she asked as they stood outside the door while she washed the platter from which they had eaten their supper.

"About a little lamb, a naughty lamb that ran away from the good shepherd and got lost on the dark mountains," replied the child. Then suddenly raising his voice, he exclaimed pettishly. "You shan't hear, Nathan; you just keep away!"

A boy from one of the other houses, a shambling, awkward fellow with lack-lustre eyes, had drawn near as if to listen.

"Don't be cross to Nathan," reproved the mother. "You know he is often sick, poor boy, and very suffering. You should be good to him. Don't you think Jesus would like him to hear your pretty story?"

Janna's face grew pleasant again; the mere name of his beloved friend seemed always to make him good. "You may hear, Nathan," he said; "it is about how the good shepherd was so sorry that the lamb was naughty, so very sorry, that he went after it in the dark night and fought the fierce wolf that wanted to tear the little lamb."

"Did the wolf bite the shepherd?" mumbled Nathan, his dull eyes showing a gleam of interest.

"I think he did, for wolves 'most always bite, you

know, but Jesus didn't tell me that. He only told me that the shepherd was very glad to have his little lamb again."

A man who had come out from one of the houses and was standing by with a sneer upon his face took Nathan by the arm.

"Not much of a story, to my thinking," he said. "But what could you expect of Jesus? Always with the children or else off by himself upon the hilltops yonder. A man never amounts to anything who doesn't mix with men."

"He makes the children happy, Obed," replied Ruth.

"Yes," said Obed, his face growing softer as he looked at his afflicted son. "It is something, of course, to make the children happy."

Obed led Nathan away, and Janna followed Ruth into their house, where she laid him to sleep on the divan that was bed and couch and almost everything else in the way of furniture of the room. After that the father and mother went up the outer stair to sit upon the house-top. The moon was shining on the low, round hills that encircle the village "as the leaves encircle a rose." The clustered houses gleamed white in their thick bowers of trees and vines. The fragrance of many flowers rose on the sweet night air. The village was still save for the murmur of voices on the roofs and now and then the distant bark of a dog guarding the sheep upon the hillsides. The children in all the houses had gone to rest.

“Ezra,” said Ruth after a few minutes of quiet thought, “what do you think it means, the preaching of that prophet by Jordan of whom we heard to-day? Do you really believe that the Lord is about to visit His people at last?”

“Why not, Ruth? Is it not this what we have all been looking for and praying for this many a year? Have we not reason to believe that the redemption of Jerusalem draws nigh?”

“And that King Messiah is coming for our deliverance! O Ezra, can it be that we shall live to see our land free from the dominion of the stranger and the Lord’s Anointed reigning over us?”

“What did they tell us that the prophet said?” replied her husband. “What, but that the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

“And ‘repent’; he said that also, Ezra, ‘repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.’”

“Aye, for verily the nation needs to repent, Ruth. We have sinned, we and our fathers; and it is by repentance and the casting off of sin that the valleys are to be filled up and the rough places levelled for King Messiah’s chariot, as the prophet Esaias has said.”

“For King Messiah’s chariot!” exclaimed Ruth fervently, clasping her hands. “God grant that He come speedily!”

They sat quiet in the moonlight plunged in deepest thought. At length Ezra rose and, covering his head, stood for a long time bent forward in silent prayer. Then, holding out his hand to Ruth, she rose and stood

reverently bent beside him as he repeated the evening prayer that for thousands of years has gone up nightly from the homes of pious Israelites all over the world :

“O Lord, our God! Cause us to lie down in peace and raise us up again to life, O our King! Spread over us the tabernacle of Thy peace: strengthen us before Thee in Thy good counsel and deliver us for Thy name’s sake. Be Thou for protection round about us. Keep far from us the enemy, the pestilence, the sword, famine, and affliction. Keep Satan from before and from behind us, and hide us in the shadow of Thy wings, for Thou art God who helpest and deliverest us; and Thou, O God, art a gracious and merciful King. Keep Thou our going out and our coming in, for life and for peace, from henceforth and for ever!”

They were sitting at table in the dawn of the next morning when Mary, the mother of Jesus, came into the court. Her eyes were red as if from tears, and yet her face was serene; for more than ever it wore that expression as if she saw some glorious thing that others did not see.

“My Jesus is gone to the Jordan,” she said in a low voice, as she seated herself near Ruth, after the morning greetings had been spoken.

Ruth looked up in excitement. “To the prophet!” she exclaimed.

“Yes,” replied Mary. Her eyes filled with tears, yet her smile was mysteriously sweet. “He has never left me before, you know, and it is quite right that he should

go. His brothers are good sons and will take care of me."

"Yes," Ezra replied thoughtfully, "we all know where Jesus' heart is. That cry of the prophet, 'The kingdom of God is at hand,' could not but stir him to his very soul!"

Little Janna had come around to where Mary sat and was leaning against her knee. "Where is Jesus gone?" he asked. "Are they going to make him King?"

"No, foolish little one," said his mother. "You are too young to understand what we are saying;" but Mary encircled the child in her arms and pressed a kiss upon his brow.

"How do you think he will come—Messiah our King?" asked Ruth. Mary made no answer, but Ezra replied:

"Suddenly to his temple he will come. Has not Malachi, the prophet, said it? Ah, that will be a great and terrible day, when the heathen that desecrate the holy city shall flee before him and he shall smite his enemies with the sword of his mouth."

"But he will speak peace unto his own people, Ezra," said his wife in gentle tones, for Ezra had risen in his enthusiasm and his eyes were flashing fire.

"Ah, yes, unto his own," he said, taking his seat again stiffly, as one who moves with pain. "But who shall know that he is of the remnant that are his very own? Who shall abide the day of his appearing? For he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

"Yes, but not to destroy," said Mary in tones so

thrilling that both Ezra and Ruth looked at her in surprise. "Not to destroy, but to offer unto Jehovah an offering in righteousness."

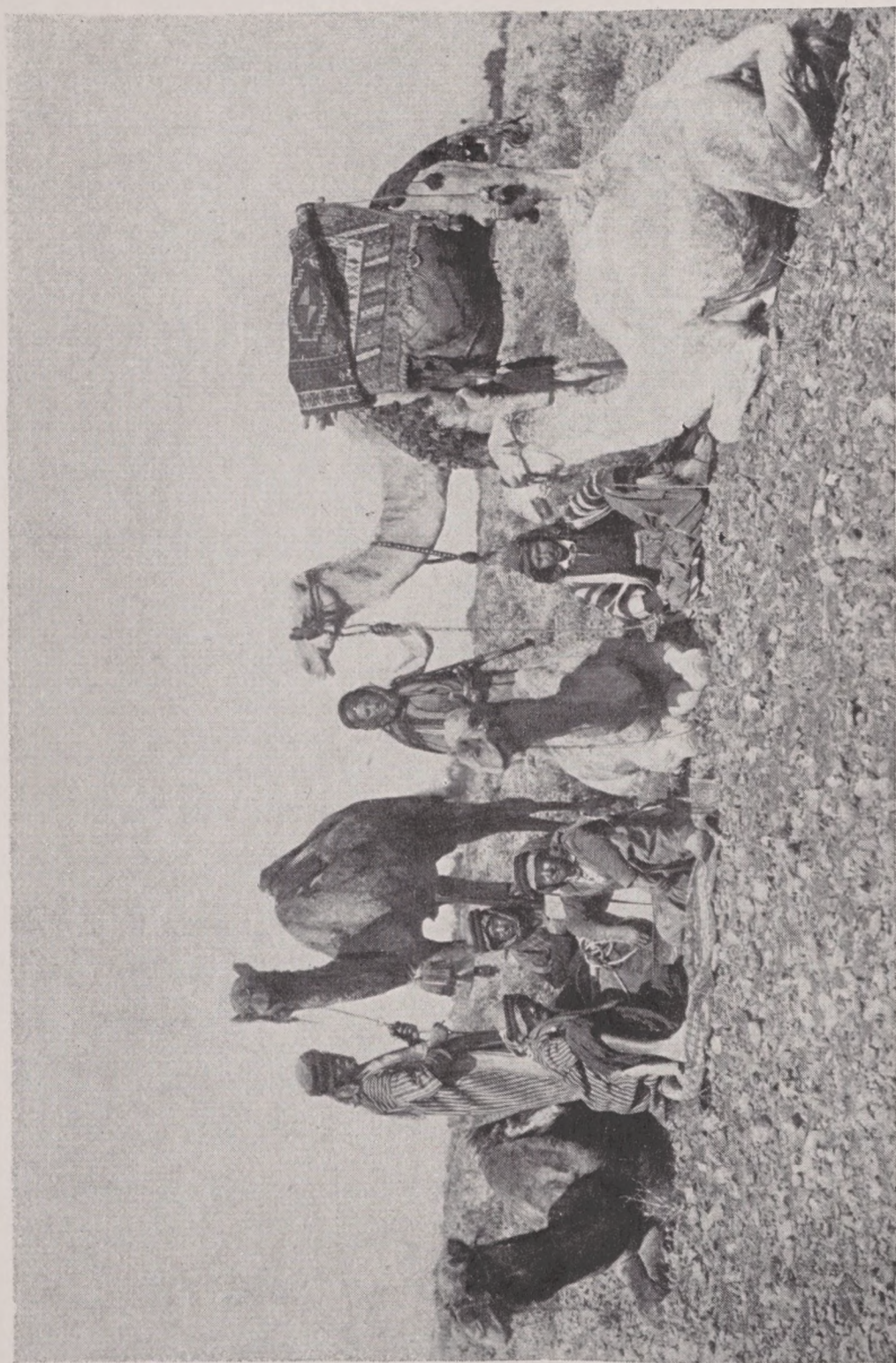
"Ah, yes, in righteousness," returned Ezra, "but oh, our sins, our sins!" he added with a groan. "His kingdom will be one of holiness—how shall we sinners enter in?"

"The sacrifices," began Ruth in a hesitating voice, but little Janna, who had been dutifully quiet while the elders were speaking, as little boys in Nazareth were taught to do, now gave a deep sigh of weariness. All eyes were turned toward him in sympathy, for they understood that a little boy gets tired with such talk.

"Lend Janna to me to-day, Ruth," said Mary rising. "My house seems lonely without my son, and when I hear the child's little feet pattering about I shall fancy it is yesterday and my Jesus with me still." And so, as the young mother assented, Mary and the little boy went away hand in hand, Mary with her water-jar upon her shoulder, for she had but called in on her way to the fountain to inquire how Ezra found himself. For over Ezra hung a dark shadow, that of creeping palsy, that threatened to make him helpless in the very midst of his years.

It was Janna's great delight to go to the fountain. All the women of the village went there for water, and with them went their little children—the *taph*, or clinging ones, so young that they cling to their mothers' gowns when they are tired or bashful.

There were half a dozen there to-day, round-eyed,



A HALT OF THE CARAVAN.

bare-legged children like Janna, who looked furtively out from behind the screen of their mothers' garments, and then, growing suddenly bold, ran toward one another to compare the treasures they had in their hands, nut-shells, or bits of stone, or little blocks of wood. But the mothers spoke together of their sons and husbands who had set out that morning to go to the Jordan, where the prophet was calling men to repent. "What does it all mean?" they asked one another.

"They say it is Elias come back to earth again," said one of a group of girls, laughing and showing her white teeth, "but I think it is easy enough to wear a coarse robe of camel's hair and call oneself a prophet. Can he raise the dead to life as Elias did? When he does that we will believe he is a prophet; is not that so, Penninah?" she asked a girl who stood near and who joined her in her mocking laugh.

"Peace, Esther," said Mary gently, as she lifted her water-jar upon her shoulder. "You know not what you are saying. There are other things for a prophet to do beside raise the dead."

"What things?" asked the girl, her mocking checked by Mary's earnest words.

"Such as to touch the careless heart and make it feel the presence of the Lord God," said Mary seriously; and no one spoke flippantly as she moved away with little Janna clinging to her skirts.

As they crossed the market place where the great road from the sea to Damascus passed the gate, they stood still to watch a caravan that was going by, camels loaded

with rich stuffs, and donkeys bearing provisions, and men walking beside them wearing curious garments, with sandals on their feet and long staves in their hands. A boy about twelve years old stood in the gateway gazing at them, but as he moved to make room for little Janna to see he said to Mary :

“I should like to join that caravan. I am tired of Nazareth, and I would gladly see the world.”

“You are rather young for that, Bar-joses,” she answered seriously.

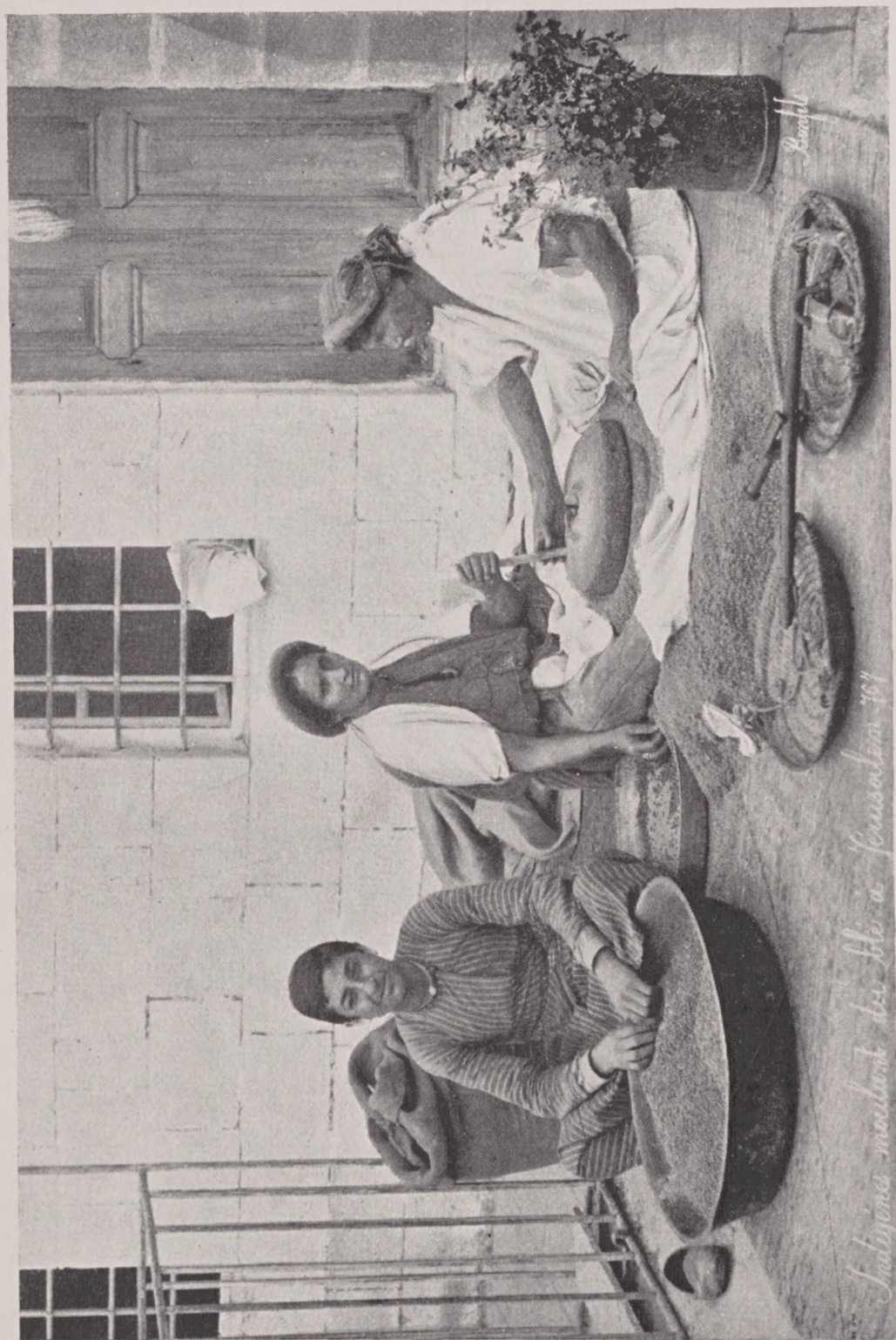
“For all that I mean to go somewhere,” he replied. “My father is dead; why should I stay? There is no one to care for me now that Jesus is gone away. He was good to me,” he added in a softer tone.

“And to me too,” said little Janna. “I love Jesus.”

“He is good to all the clinging ones,” rejoined Bar-joses, “and to the free ones* too. Now that he is gone I shall not stay here. I shall go to Capernaum and learn to be a fisherman.”

“Go, then, to Zebedee, my sister’s husband,” said Mary. “Tell him Mary of Nazareth sends greeting and asks him to teach you his trade if he has need of a helper.”

* The Jews distinguish eight different periods of childhood by special names. Children the age of Janna, who cling to their mothers’ skirts in walking, are *taph*, the clinging ones. Boys of eleven or twelve are *naar*, those who have shaken themselves free



A CORNER OF THE COURT.

CHAPTER III.

HOW SOME FISHERMEN OF CAPERNAUM HEARD THE PROPHET'S CALL.

IN the court of Zebedee's house in Capernaum all was activity and bustle. It was still very early ; the sun had not risen high enough to peep over the parapet of the roof, and the place lay in cool shadow, of which Zebedee's partners and servants were fain to take advantage. Two women were grinding corn at a mill in one corner to make bread for the morning meal ; two others were pounding clothes in a tank beside a fountain set in the wall ; the remaining space in the court and all the lower rooms of the house were occupied by men-servants engaged in salting down fish in casks, or wrapping the largest and finest in cool green leaves for packing in donkey panniers, or laying others not so choice in flat open baskets to be carried at once to the city market. Three young men, from twenty to thirty years old, who had laid aside their upper robes and tucked up their under-garments in their girdles, were sometimes giving orders, sometimes helping in the work. A little apart stood the old man Zebedee surveying it all with an air of satisfaction, now and then adding a word to the commands of his younger partners.

In the midst of the bustle a lad came in through the

tunnel-like alley that led in from the street and, perceiving Zebedee, advanced toward him with a respectful obeisance.

"Peace be to you, boy!" said the old man. "Do you bring me a message?"

"A greeting from Mary of Nazareth," answered the boy. "And she says, will Zebedee take Bar-joses for a servant and teach him the fisherman's trade?"

"Bar-joses!" repeated Zebedee. "Are you of her husband's kindred?"

"No," replied the boy, "I am nothing to her—only—" he hesitated, and then added, "only my father and mother are dead, and her son Jesus was very kind to me."

"Orphaned, poor lad," said Zebedee, with quick sympathy. "And so you would learn the fisher's trade. You come in good time. We had a rare catch last night. Ho, Phineas," he added, raising his voice, "let this boy help you with the salting, and see what he is good for."

While he spoke a woman came out upon the gallery upon which the rooms of the second story opened. She was dressed in fine white linen and wore a short white veil over her hair, pushed back, however, so that her whole face could be seen. A kind, motherly face it was, that brightened into a smile when Zebedee looked up and saw her.

"Peace to you, Salome," he said; "here is a lad who brings greetings from your sister, Mary of Nazareth. I have just undertaken, at her request, to try him and see if he can make a fisherman."

The woman came eagerly toward the stair that led down into the court ; but just at that moment her attention was attracted by a stir about the entrance.

A young man followed by a servant driving a string of donkeys came into the court through the tunnel. He was very young, barely eighteen, though tall and vigorous. He wore a large, square mantle, his brown robe hung down to his sandaled feet, while his head was covered with a brown kerchief bound on with yellow cords and flowing back over the shoulders. The youth came directly up to Zebedee with the words, "Peace be to you, my father," receiving the answer, "The blessing of the God of Jacob be upon you, my son." The other young men gathered around the traveller, but at sight of his mother he broke away from them and, running toward her, threw his arms around her, with warm kisses.

"You will stay to breakfast, Simon and Andrew," said Zebedee addressing two of his young partners, as a servant came to say that the morning meal was ready. "Let one of the men go and tell your wife, Simon. You must hear what news John has brought us from Jerusalem."

Attendants drew near with basins and ewers, one to pour water on dusty feet, others to remove the stains of toil from the hands of those who had been at work, handing them afterwards their upper robes and headkerchiefs. All being ready, they went to breakfast under an awning upon the flat roof of the house.

"What success, my son?" asked Zebedee, taking his seat after the prayer had been said.

"It could not be better, father," replied the young man. "The high priest's steward has many times said that the fish I served him were better than he got from other merchants; and the day before I set forth from Jerusalem the high priest himself sent for me, commended the freshness and the fine quality of our wares, and bade me consider myself engaged to furnish all the fish that would be used at his table. And a like message came to me from the new governor, Pontius Pilate, and from Nicodemus, who, you know, is a noted rabbi, a member of the Jerusalem Sanhedrin. I have a goodly sum to divide between us all," he added, with a flush of pleasure.

"That is well," said the father. "We will attend to that when breakfast is over. You have shown yourself a worthy partner, young though you are."

"It was a happy thought of John's," said Simon, "that of going to Jerusalem to represent our firm and so enlarge our trade. Surely we need no longer think of him as a youth. That was the thought of a man."

"Well said, partner Simon," replied Zebedee with a pleased looked. "And now no more of business while we sit at table."

"Tell us rather of your journey home, my son," said the mother. "You came by way of Bethshan and Sychar doubtless, and were so well provided with things needful that you required to have no dealings with the Samaritans?"

"Well provided I was indeed, mother, but I did not

come through Samaria," answered the young man, his eyes suddenly lighting up as if a fire had been kindled there. "I went down to Jericho and so up the Jordan Valley with a great throng of men from Jerusalem and all parts of Judea, that I might see and hear the wonderful prophet who has suddenly appeared and is baptizing multitudes in the Jordan."

"I have heard something of him," said Zebedee. "And so you saw him, my son?"

"Yes, father, I tarried for a day to hear him preach. O father, if you had heard him you would be ready to give up all thought of business; indeed, you would find it hard to turn away from his preaching. For he says," and John's eyes flashed and his cheeks burned as he turned eagerly from one to another, "he says that the kingdom of God is at hand, that He is coming who shall lay the axe to the root of the trees, to hew down and cast into the fire all who are his enemies, destroying them with a terrible destruction."

"The kingdom of God!" exclaimed every member of the little group.

"Yes, the kingdom of God," repeated John. "The time that Israel has long waited for has come at last. His enemies shall be destroyed. His Anointed is to come, and His people are to be baptized with the Holy Ghost to carry out His behests."

"Yes, so have the prophets taught that it should be," said the father. "But is that all his message?"

"He calls on every one to repent of sin and be baptized for its remission," the youth went on. "And he

preached with such power and solemnity that my heart melted within me while he spoke. I should like to be baptized; I should have liked to remain with him as his disciple."

"And what about our trade, then?" asked Andrew. "Would you leave that just when you have got it upon so fine a footing?"

"What!" exclaimed John's brother James, who had kept an intense silence, "think about trade when there is hope of the speedy coming of the Messiah King! Where will our trade be then? Shall we not leap to join his forces and march with them to cast down the power of Rome and Idumea?" He half rose from the table, but seated himself again as he caught his mother's glance.

"I know," said Andrew thoughtfully, "our trade is of small importance indeed compared with that, and yet there must be fishermen, I suppose, even in the Messiah's reign."

"There will be great turnings and overturnings when he comes," said old Zebedee. "It will be a time of awful judgment. The yoke of Rome and of Herod will not be lightly shaken off."

"But every loyal son of Jacob will spring to arms at the sound of his call, my father," exclaimed James with flashing eyes. "O God, hasten the day? My soul faints with longing for its coming."

The mother had looked from one to another of her eager sons without speaking, but now she asked John, "How does the prophet describe his coming, my son?"

“He will come in terrible might, mother, to those who set themselves up against him, burning them like chaff in unquenchable fire, but the just, those who long for his appearing, he will gather to himself like good ripe wheat.”

“What was that about preparation?” interrupted the eldest of the four young men, who had not yet spoken.

“O Simon, when the prophet spoke of that I forgot the conquering might of the Messiah in the longing I had to be made ready for him in my heart. ‘Repent,’ he preached, and he made it so plain that the Messiah’s reign must be a reign of holiness, that the blackness of my own life appalled me. I longed to pass under the waters with the prophet and come up clean from sin. O father, if I might go back there and hear him yet again!”

“And I too,” said Andrew, “would cheerfully give up something of our opportunities of trade to learn of him the truth about the kingdom.”

“And so would I,” said Simon.

“There is no reason why you should not all go, if you like,” said Zebedee. “Let John but conduct the loaded donkeys to Jerusalem and fulfill his engagements there, taking Phineas, our trusty servant, to leave in charge of our affairs. Then you can all go to meet him where the prophet is, beside the Jordan.”

CHAPTER IV.

HOW MARY TOLD LITTLE JANNA THE STORY OF JESUS' CHILDHOOD.

IN two of the humble homes of Nazareth there was anxiety about Ezra; he had been seriously ill, and though he had somewhat recovered, it was very plain that he would never again be able to travel about with his pack. There was only one thing to be done—remove to Capernaum and open a shop in the bazaar of the cloth merchants. With the aid of Ruth he could still serve customers, half helpless though he was.

In those anxious days little Janna spent much time at Mary's house. The carpenter's bench was still there, though Jesus was gone, and there were still blocks and shavings lying about with which the little boy could play. While Mary was busy with her work he amused himself with them; but when she sat down beside the door with her needle or her distaff, he would come and sit on the ground at her feet and ask her to tell him more about Jesus when he was a little boy.

That was always the subject of their talk. It seemed as if the longer that beloved friend was absent the deeper became his image in little Janna's heart; and to the mother, parted for the first time from the first-born son who had been to her what son had never been to

mother before, the days when he was a little child and all her own came back with the freshness of a present experience.

So, while she plied her distaff and little Janna sat upon the ground at her feet, she told him over and over again the story of Jesus' childhood. How even as a *jeled*, a newly-born one, he had been sweeter than other babies, so strong, so well-shapen, so good, never making trouble, content to lie where he was put; how as a *jonck*, a suckling, he had been bubbling over with joy, pleased at all the sights and sounds around him, brave to bear the bruises his superabundant activity brought upon him, quick to recognize every tone of his mother's voice and heed all her little warnings; and so on, through all the dear stages of infancy, ever bright and full of life, yet ever obedient to his mother's voice, and ah, so full of love, his little face shining with quick response to every one who said a pleasant word to him, yet always loving his mother best of all! And then, when he had grown to be a *taph*, a clinging one, like little Janna himself, ah, then, how dear he had been! A real help with the little brothers and sisters as they came, one by one, into the cradle, a sturdy little servant for her in her household tasks, and yet so full of play, so wide-awake with joy, that all the village children loved to be with him. They never quarrelled with him, never; they did not even quarrel among themselves when he was playing with them, for he always knew the way to make them to be at peace in their plays, "even when he was no older than you, my Janna,"

Mary would add, with a soft smile and a lovely, far-away look in her wondering brown eyes.

“Was he not naughty sometimes?” Janna would ask.

“He did not always find it easy to obey, he was so full of interest in whatever he was doing,” Mary would answer, “but he never disobeyed. Sometimes, when he was little like you, and his brother James was fretful and the village children were calling him to play, or when I had work for him to do and he heard the sound of a great caravan passing through the market place, he would stand still a moment when I called him, and his face would look troubled. But even then he never needed to be called twice. In a moment he would come with his brown eyes all full of love again, ready to do his mother’s will. No, my Jesus never disobeyed,” his mother would say reflectively; and then she would sink into silence until the little boy said again:

“Tell me more about Jesus, please.”

And then she would tell him how she had taught him all the Scripture from Adam to the Flood, as it is told in the Book of Moses, while yet he was a little clinging one, standing beside her knee; and how easily he learned to repeat the *Shema*, the creed, beginning, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord,” and the six Psalms of the *Hallel*, and the first eight chapters of Leviticus, which every little boy should know before he begins to go to school.

“I can say the *Shema*,” Janna would interpose, “and I almost know the *Hallel* too.” And Mary would kiss

him on the brow for love of the blessed child who had once stood where he was standing, leaning against her knee. And she would go on to tell how fast Jesus learned at school, and how he loved to read in the parchment roll of the Scriptures which had come down to his mother from her father's father, and which was carefully treasured in the ark which Janna had often seen on a table in the place of honor in Mary's house. For Jesus had not been satisfied with learning what the other children learned at school, but had persuaded the Chazzan, the minister of the synagogue, to teach him to read the sacred Hebrew tongue in which the word of the Lord had come to Moses and the prophets.

"And when he grew big he used to play in the market place?" Janna would ask, to whom this, rather than the reading of Hebrew, was the object of high ambition.

"Ah, yes," Mary would answer, "and all the boys were so eager to play with him. He was a very king among them, the leader in all their games, he was so strong and so swift at running, and always played fair in everything. There was always a train of boys following him, little and big, for he was very gentle to the little ones, and would never let the big ones tease them or tyrannize over them. All the little ones loved my Jesus when he was a boy."

"I love Jesus, too," little Janna would say, and again there would be silence while Mary pondered in her heart the events of that long-past childhood.

"Tell me about when he went to the mountain."

Janna would say at last, and then Mary would tell how Jesus used to love to climb that highest hill that little Janna could see over yonder, and stand there, looking off to snowy Hermon in the north or to the broad plain of Esdraëlon in the south, where long ago Jehovah had delivered His people out of the hand of Sisera by the hand of His servant Barak, and where many a time since He had delivered them out of the hand of other enemies by the hands of His servants, Saul and David; and how from the top of that hill he could see afar off toward the sunrising the lake of Galilee down in the deep basin of the hills, and westward the great sea and the mighty Mount Carmel where Elijah slew the prophets of Baal. Or how he would pass the summer afternoons lying amid the flowers on the hillside, thinking long thoughts that he would partly tell to her when he came home—about the fox that had flashed passed him, going to the hole that God had given him for a home, and the birds of the air for which He had promised food; and how when he saw the sower going forth to sow in the early spring-time, or watched the harvesters separating the wheat from the tares, strange thoughts had come to him, which he hardly understood, and which he could not repeat even to her, his mother. And then Mary would break off again, for she knew that now she was going beyond the little boy's depth.

So the days went on until the time came when Ruth and Ezra had all their preparations made for removing to Capernaum, and Mary must say good-by to little Janna, the child who was so dear to her because he was one whom her Jesus loved.

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE PROPHET CALLED JESUS THE SON OF GOD.

BAR-JOSES had been six weeks with the servants of Zebedee learning the fisher's trade. He had begun to be really useful in sorting and packing the fish, and had even learned how to handle the easily managed lateen sail in case a sudden squall on the lake made quick handling necessary. Yet his thoughts were not all with the fish and the boats. They often went back to Jesus who had been so kind to him in Nazareth, and he wondered where he was now and if he should ever see him again.

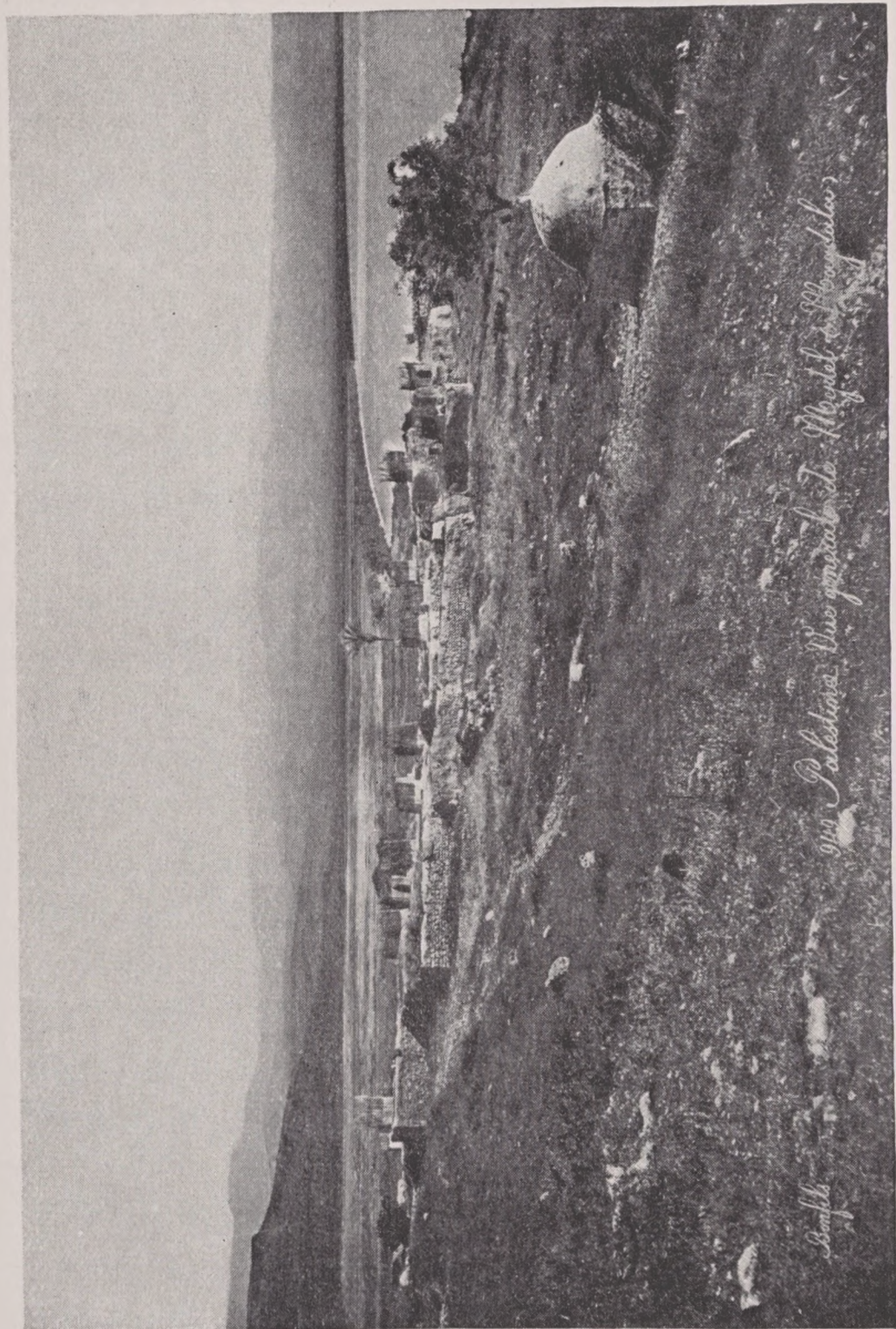
He had another subject of thought. At times when he was working in the court and Salome had come down to look after her maids, he would hear her exchange a few words with Zebedee about their sons, who were with the prophet at the Jordan, and discuss the question of the Messiah's speedy coming; and strange thoughts about what would happen if the Messiah should really come by degrees came more and more to occupy his mind. Now and then some word came from James and John and their partners, Simon and Andrew, who had some time ago met by the Jordan; and at last a message arrived saying that they had become disciples of the prophet, having resolved to remain and learn of him, and so pre-

pare themselves more perfectly to meet that great and terrible day of the Lord which must usher in the Messiah's kingdom.

When this word was brought to the Capernaum home, Salome said: "We must send some things to our sons, Zebedee; they will need food and a change of clothing."

And it was decided that Bar-joses should be sent, for he could best be spared from the work that had become pretty heavy for old Zebedee, now that all his young partners were away.

A proud boy was Bar-joses as he walked beside the heavily-laden donkey through the narrow streets of Capernaum and came out upon the broad open place before the southern gate, where the elders were sitting to decide upon cases and the merchants were chaffering and the children playing and calling to one another. His mind was so full of the kingdom, of which he had been hearing much in Zebedee's house and for which he was beginning to look with eager expectation, that it gave him a painful shock to come upon a publican standing at the place of toll to collect the tax which the Roman government exacted on everything that passed the gates. Every one hated to pay the tax, which, however small, reminded them that Israel was not a free people, but lay under the dominion of Rome; and to Bar-joses the contrast between his high anticipations and the reality made him glad to add his voice to the jeers and taunts with which the town boys assailed Matthew, the despised tax-gatherer.



Beaufort 9113 Palestine. View general side. Hotel de Ville.

THE TOWN OF THE DYERS.

This, however, did not detain him, and he was soon outside of the city, walking along the highway beside the lake of Galilee. This was its broadest part; it was eight miles across to where the mountains of Gilead rose purple against the deep blue sky. All the beautiful sheet of water was flecked with vessels; the gilded pin-naces of the nobles, Roman war galleys with their flashing oars, and the brightly colored lateen sails of the fishing boats. Bar-joses tried to distinguish those of Zebedee among the hundreds that skimmed the waters, but not succeeding turned his attention to the nearer scene—the lovely plain of Genesaret, with its rich grass so thickly studded with flowers that it looked like a Persian carpet, the waterfalls bounding down the sides of the hills that walled it in on the west, and the picturesque Horns of Hattin, the two-peaked mount, that towered over all.

It was still early when he passed through Magdala, the town of the dyers. He had not thought of stopping there; but if he had planned to do so, something that he saw would have made him hasten on. It was a young woman rushing frantically up and down the market place, her clothes half torn off her, shouting, screaming, like one possessed. Now she threw herself upon the ground and bit the very dust, throwing out her arms and legs in horrible contortions; again, she leaped to her feet and howled and sang with a voice so unearthly that Bar-joses was rooted to the spot with horror.

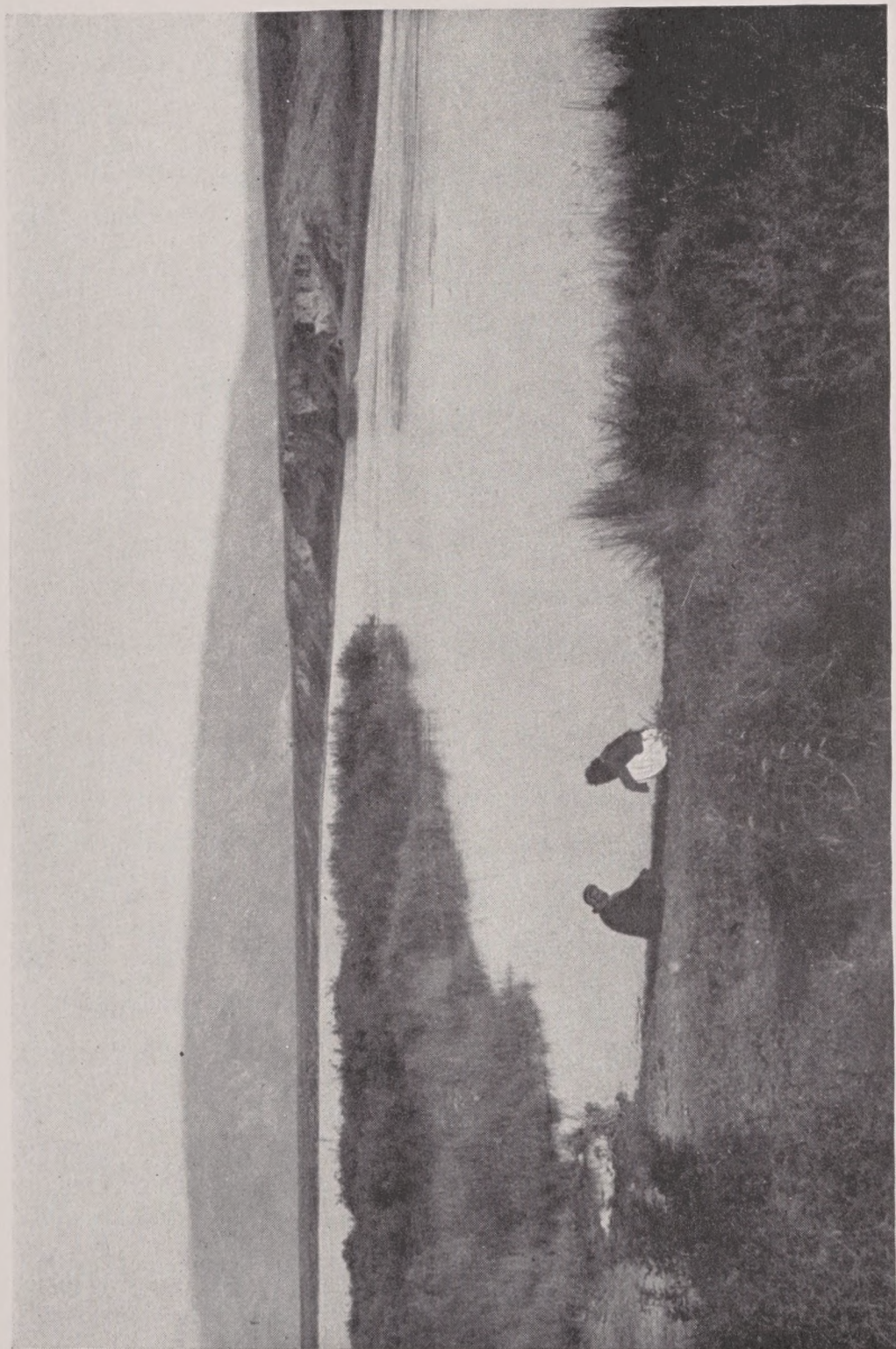
“Go away, do not notice her,” said a man near him

in an awe-struck voice. "It is Mary, the possessed one. Seven devils have taken up their abode in her; they will leave her no peace until they have tortured her to death."

Shuddering, Bar-joses urged his donkey forward. The frightful ravings rang in his ears till long after he had passed through the gate and was following the road along the base of the cliffs that here came down close to the water side.

Though he felt weak from the terror of what he had seen, he was far from foot-weary, and he pressed on to Tiberias, the famous new city of Herod, with its splendid palaces and its strong fortress on the overhanging precipice, its gardens and pleasure-grounds, its works of Greek and Roman art.

The orphan boy had not been as carefully brought up as he would have been if his parents had lived, and the sight of the marble statues and golden eagles did not fill him with the horror with which they would have inspired his more strictly nurtured play-fellows, taught to look upon such things as transgressions of the second commandment. Still he did not feel at home here; it all was too new and grand, too different from anything he had seen before; and so he kept on until, a mile outside of the city wall, he came to the famous Baths of Tiberias—hot springs to which people resorted from all over the world to seek for health. Here, under the shelter of a group of stately palm-trees, he fed his donkey, ate his mid-day meal, and lay for two or three hours in the shade waiting for the noontide heat to pass.



WHERE THE JORDAN LEAVES THE LAKE.

When the sun began to decline toward the cliffs that had now closed in upon the road and overhung the lake, he went on, meaning to reach Tarichæa, the fish-packing town on the point where the Jordan issues from the lake, in time to pass the night there.

As to the length of the journey that lay before him he knew nothing. A company of travellers whom he had met soon after leaving Capernaum had told him that the prophet was moving up the Jordan valley, followed by great crowds of people; and on reaching Tarichæa he learned that they had come as far north as Bethany, at the ford of the Jordan on one of the caravan roads from the east. Bar-joses had already covered more than half the distance to this place. The morrow's noon would bring him to his journey's end.

At dawn next morning he was on the way, for he had been warned that the heat of the Jordan valley was intense even in this early spring-time of the year. The valley was narrow, shut in by walls of hills on both sides, and the river, tumbling along in a deep cleft nearly two hundred feet farther down, gave little freshness to the air. The trees and flowers were beautiful; in some places the oleanders made a fragrant jungle, difficult to force his way through, and then again he would come out upon far-reaching cornfields, lovely in their early green. The air was full of the songs of birds and the tinkling of streamlets, tumbling down the hillsides to join the rapid river in the cleft below.

The road was very populous now, though nearly all the people were going in the same direction as himself.

Sometimes a litter would be borne past him with a wealthy Pharisee reclining within. Sometimes a squad of soldiers would overtake him with long swinging stride. Again it would be a group of publicans; and sometimes Bar-joses would himself overtake and pass a company of Galilean peasants, walking heavily, as those do who are used to follow the plow.

He made such good progress that it was still early when the valley widened out, at the same time sloping rapidly toward the river-bed; and in the green plain on the farther side he saw hundreds of black hair-cloth tents and many booths covered by gaily striped *abbas* or by fading boughs, showing that he had reached his journey's end. He pressed on among the scattered groups to where the crowd seemed thickest, around the road that led down to the ford. He had crossed the river and was already beginning to look about him for James and John when he saw some one coming up the valley road, at the sight of whom he forgot his young masters, his errand, the donkey, and everything else.

For it was Jesus, the young man who had so often been kind to him in Nazareth. Bar-joses started on a run to meet him and then suddenly stopped. Jesus was somehow different from what he had been. What was it? Why did Bar-joses feel unwilling to run and meet him whom he had always so gladly run to meet before?

Jesus was walking steadily forward looking upward toward the sky. In his face it was as if a light were shining, not upon him from without, but upon others

from within him—at least it seemed so to Bar-joses. His look was joyous, triumphant even, and although he was not running, his step had the spring of one who is very strong, just setting forth to run a race.

Though he appeared so strong and so triumphant, it seemed to Bar-joses that he looked more kind than even he had ever looked before. It was not fear or dread that kept the boy from running toward him, but rather a feeling that he might not carelessly intrude; that Jesus was himself engaged with other things. It was as if the tallith covered his head and he were bowed in prayer; the youngest child would not have intruded upon one thus engaged.

As Bar-joses stood a little withdrawn from the path, gazing upon Jesus as he walked, he heard a voice behind him saying in piercing tones, "Behold the Lamb of God!" He turned quickly; at a little distance a man was coming up from the river whom Bar-joses recognized as the prophet. He wore a long hairy robe belted in with a leathern thong. His tangled hair hung low over his shoulders, his untrimmed beard reached to his girdle, his eyes were fiery and his voice was shrill and seemed to pierce the ears of those who heard. Several people were clustered around him; from their dress Bar-joses knew them to be priests and levites. The eyes of all in the group were turned in the direction toward which the prophet's outstretched arm pointed—toward Jesus! Some of them repeated his words in tones that might be awe and might be horror, "The Lamb of God!"

Bar-joses knew that the prophet must be referring to the lambs offered every day for sacrifice in the temple; but why did he point to Jesus?

The shrill voice of the prophet was raised again. "This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is become before me; for he was before me." At this Bar-joses saw that the priests and levites spoke among themselves with many gesticulations; and when he turned again to look for Jesus he barely caught a glimpse of him disappearing among the crowd. But at that moment the prophet spoke once more. "And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing with water." Jesus! the friend whose kindness had been the one bright spot in Bar-joses's life since his mother died: was it of *him* that the prophet had all this time been teaching? What was this that he was saying?

"I beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him. And I knew him not, but He that sent me to baptize with water, He said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

At these words a sudden agitation broke out among the priests and levites that surrounded the prophet, and Bar-joses, bewildered and confused, hardly knew whether he had heard aright or not. He retreated hastily before the group, that had now reached the very place where he was standing, and then suddenly he remembered his

donkey—where had he left it? In terror he started to run back, and it was with great relief that he saw one of his young masters coming toward him leading the beast by the bridle.

“You here, Bar-joses?” John said; “I recognized our old donkey, but could not dream how he had come here. You bring us news and good gifts from home: come to our tent and tell us all about it. How go on things in dear old Capernaum?”

It was impossible for Bar-joses to speak of what he had seen and heard, especially as John evidently knew nothing of what had taken place. He followed his young master to the tent occupied by the two pairs of brothers and answered all their eager questions. But that night, when all was quiet and he lay wrapped in his striped abbas under the starry sky, he saw again the radiant face of Jesus; he heard again the prophet’s ringing words, “*This is the Son of God!*” and his whole heart went out to that dear friend in a love that was very confused, very perplexed, almost terrified, and yet so true and strong that it made life seem a new thing to the orphan boy of Nazareth.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW THE LORD MADE THE FISHERMEN HIS FRIENDS AND THE BOY HIS SERVANT.

JOHN too had heard something before he went to bed, a vague rumor that excited while it perplexed him. His prophet master, the Baptist, to whom with fervor he had attached himself, had announced something. What was it? That the Messiah had come? That the Judge was at the door? That the King of Israel had appeared? And all this multitude had gone serenely to sleep as if the great and terrible day of the Lord were not immediately to dawn!

And yet, John reflected with a new perplexity, the Baptist had not of late said anything about that terrible day. When he had first heard him, on his way home from Jerusalem, the prophet's sermons had been full of impassioned warnings—how the threshing floor was to be thoroughly cleansed and the worthless trees cut off at the root and the ungodly baptized with unquenchable fire. But since he had joined the prophet the second time his teachings had all been about the baptism of the Holy Spirit that the repentant were to receive, and the surpassing worthiness of the Lord's Anointed; how the Baptist himself was nothing but the slave running before the Messiah's chariot to see that all hindrances were

kept out of the way, not worthy to hold any office that would bring him near the person of the Messiah, not even to unloose his sandals. And as John, lying in his tent in the darkness of the night, recalled these words to mind, his heart swelled with the desire to be worthy to serve one so august, yet so beneficent, the King who could bestow upon his loyal subjects the baptism of the Holy Spirit!

All the next day John tried to speak to the prophet of the thoughts that came into his heart, but there was no opportunity, so eagerly did the people throng about him to hear his words, to confess their sins and to receive baptismal purification. The priests and levites had gone back to Jerusalem; they were not satisfied with the announcement the Baptist had made to them. A Messiah who merely took away sin, who did not purpose to be their captain and champion in throwing off the yoke of Rome and subduing the whole world to the rule of Israel, could not, they persuaded themselves, be the true Messiah. So they had gone their way without even attempting to see the young man whom the prophet had pointed out, and who had not again appeared among them.

Not till four o'clock that afternoon did John find an opportunity to speak to the prophet. The people had all been baptized for that day. The Baptist had drawn a little apart, John and Andrew had joined him, and John had begun to ask his eager questions, when the prophet checked him. Raising his hand and pointing to some one who was walking alone at a little

distance, he said in a solemn tone, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

Thrilled to his very heart, John followed with his gaze the one thus pointed out, and as he looked his heart went out to the stranger in a great leap of love. Andrew too had looked, and as if with one accord, without replying to the Baptist or speaking to one another, the two young men began to move toward the stranger. Their pulses throbbed with joy when he who so mysteriously attracted them stood still and waited until they came up.

As they drew near he spoke, "What are you seeking?"

The tone encouraged them to answer, but it was not the tone of his voice alone that made their reply what it was: rather it was the expression of his eyes as he looked on them. Little Janna had often seen that look, and though he did not understand it, he understood Jesus better for having seen it. Bar-joses had often seen it, and it had given the neglected boy a sense of friendship and fellowship that had kept him from yielding to the coarse temptations that had come to him in his hard life. Mary had seen it again and again, and it had lifted up her soul into a presence unspeakably glorious which yet she could not understand. And now John and Andrew saw it, and their souls were knit to his by a bond that could never be broken.

With one accord they asked him, "Master, where are you staying?"

Their one desire was to be with him, to hear him speak, to give their lives to him in perpetual allegiance.

And his answer met that desire in all its fullness. His words, "Come and see," were to them an open door by which they might enter into and become a part of his life.

John never forgot the hours he spent at Jesus' side in the green booth a little apart from the sheltering places of the great multitude. What youth of eighteen but would long for such a privilege? To be permitted in the very opening of manhood to enter into the friendship of one so strong, so sweet, so flawlessly pure, so full of joy and courage, as Jesus of Nazareth! It was an experience so marvelous that he could never speak of it. Never to any human being did John repeat the conversation of that first hour with Jesus, while Andrew was seeking his brother Simon among the great company and bringing him to Jesus.

Bar-joses had all day been lounging in the neighborhood of the place where he had seen his friend, hoping for another sight, perhaps a word from him. He had delivered to John and James, Simon and Andrew, all the messages with which Salome and Zebedee had charged him, and had received from them many messages in reply. After one day of rest it would be his duty to return to Capernaum and to his work, and James, disturbed by the thought of the burden his father was bearing alone, had decided to return with him. But Bar-joses felt that he could not go without one word from Jesus. So all day, instead of resting as he was supposed to do, he was wandering about among the tents, boy like, using his eyes and ears but asking no

questions of strangers since he felt that they knew less than he did about the matter, but determined not to go away until he had again seen Jesus.

And shortly after noon he had his wish. He caught a glimpse of the figure of one withdrawn from the multitude under the shade of a great sycamore tree, wrapped in his tallith, and yet not so concealed but that he could be recognized by one who loved him. The boy well knew that Jesus was in prayer, although his position was not the bent attitude of the devout Jew; on the contrary, he stood upright with his face upraised to heaven, and even at the distance which in reverence the boy kept between himself and Jesus, Bar-joses could see that he was not bowed under the weight of contrition or the burden of sorrow or of need, but that his soul was soaring upward in joyous communion with God. The boy kept his distance until the prayer was ended, and then his heart leaped for joy, for Jesus turned toward him and held out a hand of invitation.

So he had his hour of conversation with the friend he loved best on earth, giving him such news as he had of Mary and of Nazareth, telling him of his own new duties, pouring out all the loneliness and the perplexity of his heart; and when at length their talk was over the boy went away with an indescribable joy in his soul. For Jesus had taken him for his servant, although the work that he had given him to do was to go back to Capernaum to the duties to which he was already pledged. But oh, how different would that work be in future since Jesus had told him that he would be serv-

ing him in doing it ! It seemed to Bar-joses that new strength had been given him to resist temptation, new delight in the performance of homely duty, a new sense of fellowship with those about him. He no longer felt lonely and orphaned. Was not Jesus his friend as well as his master ? and did not that friendship seem like a bond uniting him with every one else ? For it was not with jealousy but with joy that he realized that he was not alone in the service of this strong friend ; that all lonely boys, yes, and all happy ones, were dear to him ; that his great heart of love embraced them all and made them every one friends one of another.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW THE LORD MINISTERED TO HIS MOTHER AT THE WEDDING FEAST.

THE little house in Nazareth was closed, for Mary, the mother of Jesus, had gone, accompanied by her four younger sons, to Cana to superintend the wedding of her niece, the daughter of Clopas, whose brother her husband Joseph had been. A stately and solemn occasion it was, although a time of great festivity, for no devout Jewish man or maid ever entered upon the marriage state without remembering that it was the type of the union between Jehovah and His people, as the prophets had many times taught. And therefore Rachel, the bride, and Simon, the bridegroom, had fasted and confessed their sins in preparation for their marriage. Then had come the eventful evening when the gay procession, with torches and garlands, with music and the distribution of simple gifts to the neighbors and to the children along the roadside, had escorted the veiled bride to the home of her bridegroom, with loud exclamations in praise of her beauty and virtues. There, when the words had been spoken that bound them to one another and the hands of all the guests had been washed and the prayer said over the bridal cup, the marriage

supper had begun. It was a joyous festival and would last for three whole days.

Mary was in charge of the hospitalities, that her friend, the mother of the bridegroom, might be free from household care. These were simple people who in ordinary times kept no servant; but on this occasion Mary had the help of a group of young relatives and friends who, according to custom, had offered their services as deacons or friendly ministrants. James and Jonas and Judas and Simon, Mary's four younger sons, were among them, and a few other young people living in the village.

Mary's heart was full of a joy that had nothing to do with the wedding. For on the very day of the marriage her son Jesus had returned to her. He came accompanied by five young friends, in the youngest of whom, John, Mary to her delight had recognized her own nephew, the son of her sister Salome. The others were Simon and Andrew, who were partners of John and his father and brother, a young man named Philip from Bethsaida, the native place of Simon and Andrew, and Nathanael, the son of Talmai, whose home was in Cana.

All these young men had been invited to the wedding in honor of Jesus, the kinsman of the bride. John was full of interest in the wedding festivities, so different in their village simplicity from anything he had ever seen in Capernaum; but his chief interest was not in the wedding, it was in the mother of Jesus. Something of the rapturous affection he felt for him whom he had chosen

for his master he gave to the woman whose supreme blessedness it was to be the mother of such a man as Jesus. But this was not all. John was drawn to her for her own sake: that gentle dignity, that look of sweet surprise, which since Jesus had parted from her two months before had begun to take on a veil of patient sorrow, had quite won his heart; and besides, it seemed to him that whenever her eyes rested on her eldest son she was moved with a sort of awed expectation. John thought he understood what it meant, and that made him feel as if they had a secret together. And so in all the pauses of the festivities of these three days John would seek for Mary and lead her aside for an hour of conversation.

Of course their talk was all of Jesus. Mary was never tired of telling nor John of hearing the events of his quiet life—events indeed they could hardly be called, his life had been so quiet all these years; but she loved to tell how good he was, how unlike other young men; how pious, how studious, how thoughtful, yet how devoted to her; how ready to toil for her and his brothers and sisters since their father died, and yet how full of interest in the welfare of every one about him. She told him, too, of how he loved little children, and how, wherever he went, there was always a train of them following him or clustering around him when he sat down, to hear the lovely stories that he told. But most of all she loved to dwell on what he was to her; how there had never been a care or an anxiety that did not lose its weight or its sting when she carried it to him. And

while she spoke there was always that look in her eyes as if she saw still more in him that she could never put into words.

And John had his story to tell to Mary; the mysterious, wonderful story of the Baptist's announcement—the Lamb of God; the Son of God. And when he talked of this her eyes would grow deeper and a light would come into them that John could not find the meaning of.

So they were sitting and talking on the afternoon of the third day of the marriage feast when one of Mary's younger sons came to ask her for more wine.

"But there is no more," said Mary with an air of some perplexity. "I did not know that the children of the bride-chamber were to be so many," she added in a lower voice, drawing her son apart that John might not hear; for it was the unexpected addition of himself and four friends to the number of the wedding guests—"the children of the bride chamber"—that had made the frugal store of wine run short.

John did not hear her last words, but he watched her as she went to the door and looked into the banqueting room. A few days before she had herself adorned it with all the taste that her resources allowed, and the seemingly revelry of the guests had not disturbed its modest order. But Mary was not looking at the decorations, but at her son Jesus, who was sitting in the midst of the guests, the very life of the company; for this was a simple-hearted company, not given to boisterous mirth. So strong was the attraction he exerted, as John

saw, that even the empty wine-cups were for the moment unnoticed ; but the young attendants had retreated to a corner and looked anxious and confused.

John observed that Jesus at once saw the trouble in his mother's face, and that he withdrew easily and naturally from the other guests and came to her in the outer room. Then he heard Mary say to Jesus in a tone that was not a request, and yet seemed confident of an answer, "They have no wine." A quick change came over Jesus' face, a look glad and tender and yet sad, as he took her hands in his and said gently, "What to me and thee, woman? My hour is not yet come."

Never, John thought, had he heard a word that thrilled through him like that word "woman," pronounced with such sweet tenderness, yet in a tone that seemed to vibrate between love and pain. John did not understand the meaning of Jesus' words, nor could he understand the answering look on Mary's face, with its quick changes, first of love and then of bewilderment, and then of a grand heroism, as she withdrew her hands from those of her son, and turning to the young attendants who had now gathered around her in mute appeal, said to them calmly, "Whatever he says to you, do it."

She came back quietly and took her seat beside John, but he watched eagerly to see what Jesus would do. In the outer gallery stood, according to custom, six large water-jars, placed there for the convenience of those who wanted to wash their hands or the plates and goblets used at the feast. At this late hour they stood

empty, and Jesus simply gave the direction, "Fill the water-pots with water."

There was no time to lose, for already the guests, recalled to their feasting by the absence of Jesus, upon whose words they had been hanging, were looking from their empty goblets to the disturbed countenance of the master of ceremonies. Lifting up the jars, the young people hastily bore them to the fountain at the entrance of the village. While they were gone Jesus stood upon the gallery, deep in thought, but John turned and looked in Mary's face.

"You did not understand," she said, "but I understood. Was it not you yourself who brought me word that the Baptist has announced him as the Messiah, that even your own companion, Andrew, recognized he must be the Messiah, and that Nathanael saw that he was indeed King of Israel and the Son of God?" She paused and looked upward, and the look of sweet surprise that always rested on her face grew deeper and holier.

Then she turned again to John, with a heavenly light upon her face. "Did I not know then that his hour was near at hand, the hour when he must enter upon his glorious work? And do I not know that that hour must take him from me?"

"All his dear life," she went on in a low tone of rapture, "for thirty sweet years it has been 'me and thee,' 'me and thee,' between my Jesus and me. There has been no thought, no hope, no trial, no doubt that we have not shared. He has indeed gone far beyond me in knowledge and in depth of thought; but he has never

separated himself from me. He has done everything for me, and I have done everything for him—‘me and thee’ always. The hour has not yet come when it must be so no longer, but it is very near; once more—but this, I know, must be the last time—he has shared my care and taken upon himself my burden. Yes, I know this is the last time. He may not be at my service any more, for he has his own work to do. And I can never help him any more, except by letting him go free from the tie that has bound us so close and has been so dear. This last time I have gone to him for help, and he will help me, though I do not yet know how. But see!”

She pointed to the door. The six young people had returned with their water-jars filled to the very brim with the sparkling water of the fountain; they had set them down in their places, and John heard Jesus say: “Draw out now and bear to the master of the feast.” And as they passed along bearing their brimming goblets, the mother and the friend of Jesus looked at one another in stunned amazement, for that which sparkled in the goblets was red wine. And as they looked at Jesus still standing on the gallery, rapt in thought, a great glory seemed to shine about him, not visible indeed to other eyes, but evident to those two to whom his glory had just been manifested. It seemed to them as if the Shekinah of the wilderness tabernacle, the very glory of God, were shining before their eyes.

With awe and rapture they beckoned to the four other friends of Jesus and told them all the story. It was too sacred to be made common property; even the young

attendants who had drawn the water felt that something sealed their lips. But his five disciples had now a new view of the Messiah. Already they began to see that the power by which he was to conquer the kingdom was different from the power of other conquering kings.

And to the mother there was joy in the midst of pain. For her son, with matchless consideration, had associated her in his first act of service to the world, making it his last act of service to her. Though the hour of his life-work had not yet come, yet for her help he had put forth the power that was his for that work. This evening's mysterious experience became a never-failing fountain of strength to Mary, sustaining her in the coming years in which, as a prophet had foretold, the sword of an unimaginable sorrow was to pierce her heart.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW ANTIPAS, THE SON OF CHUZA, FIRST SAW THE LORD.

A MOTHER and son were sitting in the alcove of a projecting window that almost overhung the Lake of Galilee. The spacious room showed every sign of wealth—rich rugs lay on the tiled floor, the divan that ran round the wall was beautifully draped with eastern stuffs, the richly carved stools, tables, and sofas were of costliest wood, and everything spoke not only of luxury but of refinement.

The boy knelt upon the divan, looking out of the window. He was about twelve years old, and was dressed from head to foot in fine white linen; but the tallith that lay beside him was bordered with blue, and the white head-cloth near it had fastening cords of yellow silk. The mother was a woman of very noble countenance. She wore a robe of rich eastern silk, her girdle was studded with precious stones, her hair was covered with a pointed cap of transparent texture, a silk scarf was wound around it and knotted in the back, with the ends hanging to her girdle. Heavy gold earrings were in her ears, a jewelled necklace clasped her throat, and there were golden bracelets on her white arms; her feet were encased in richly embroidered slippers, and every movement she made wafted delicate perfumes upon the

air. She lay back upon her cushions, idly fanning herself with a fan of gorgeous feathers, her eyes fixed upon her son, who in his turn was gazing out upon the lake, now and then uttering an exclamation as a fish leaped from the water or a kingfisher, swooping down, dived into the very depths and brought up his prey.

“I have some news for you, Antipas,” his mother said at length. The boy looked eagerly around. “Your father says you may go up with us to the Passover.”

“To Jerusalem !” exclaimed Antipas, springing to her side and twining his arms round her. “O mother, how good you are !”

The door opened and a man of dignified demeanor entered. His long inner garment was of purple, and his mantle was inwrought with gold ; around his neck, suspended by a fine gold chain, hung a large seal ring ; altogether his appearance was imposing, as became Chuza, the head of the household of Herod, Tetrarch of Galilee. But in his dignity was no sternness that would repel his son, and the boy ran to him crying, “O father, father, mother says that I am to go to Jerusalem !”

“So you have told him, Joanna,” said the father, seating himself in a corner of the wide window. “Yes, my son, it gives me pleasure to say that this is for a reward. You have been diligent in your studies, your teacher tells me, have especially made good progress, not only in reading the Greek authors but also in Latin, a language I am very anxious that you should be proficient in. In short, you have shown yourself so serious and capable that, though it still wants a year be-

fore you will be bound to the commandments, there is no reason why we should not follow the custom where boys are more than usually thoughtful, and permit you to make a preliminary visit to the Holy City and the temple before you actually become a son of the law."

"And when," asked the boy with sparkling eyes, "when shall we set out?"

"To-morrow," replied the father with the loving smile of one whose heart is bound up in his son; "to-morrow a caravan sets forth and we are to join it. Everything is already prepared for our departure. Your new litter has come home, my love," he added, turning to his wife; "the cushions seem to be remarkably soft and all the trappings very fine. And now, Antipas, my son, if you will come to the court you shall see what arrangement I have made for your journey. Will you come too, Joanna?" he added, holding out his hand to assist his wife to rise.

Down the broad marble staircase and through a wide hall where many servants waited, both bond and free, they went out into an inner court, gorgeous with tropical plants and cool with plashing fountains, and passed through it to the great court of Chuza's palace, where retainers of all sorts were occupied with preparations for the proposed journey. Under a spreading tree stood an Arab, in striped mantle and red fez, holding by the bridle a beautiful little white Arabian horse.

"This is for you, my son," said the father, smiling at the dumb amazement of the boy. "Come, mount, and

let me see how well you have profited by your lessons at the riding-school."

The boy caught his father's hand and kissed it, rushed to throw his arms around his mother as she stood smiling at a little distance, and then, taking the bridle from the Arab's hand, vaulted upon the horse's back without touching the stirrup.

"Well done, my Antipas!" exclaimed the delighted father. "Surely never boy better deserved a horse of his own."

A few turns around the court showed that the boy was really a skilled rider for his years; the servants all joined in applause as he put his new horse through his paces.

"That will do," said his father at last, as Antipas cantered up beside him with shining eyes and glowing cheeks, "this is enough for to-day; you and your horse know one another now. What do you say, Joanna, to taking a breath of air upon the lake while the sun goes down?"

A gay little sail-boat was moored before the house, with two men waiting for orders. The lake was alive with pleasure boats, for all the better class of citizens were taking the air at this hour; and although it was not the best time for fishing, there were also here and there the heavier shapes of fishing craft with their coarse red or brown sails. One of these attracted the attention of Antipas, as for a few moments it moved close alongside Chuza's dainty pleasure boat.

It was Jesus who was sitting in the stern of the boat,

with little Janna on his knee. Beside him sat John, holding the tiller; James and Andrew were only a little distance removed, and Bar-joses was crouching in the bottom of the boat. The eyes of all of them were fixed on Jesus, and it was the expression of love with which they looked at him that first attracted Antipas. But having looked at Jesus, he forgot all the others, for there was in the countenance of this unknown man a look of noble rapture, of unutterable joy, such as the boy had never dreamed of before. He touched his mother's hand and pointed to the fisher boat. His father saw the action and followed its direction, as their own vessel, suddenly altering its course through some manœuvre of the sailors, glided rapidly past.

"That is a remarkable countenance," Chuza observed to his wife, turning his head to look behind. "That young man has a future before him."

Nothing more was said, but as they approached the quay before Chuza's palace they saw the fishing boat come alongside. A boy leaped ashore, a basket of fish upon his arm, and went into the court. The fishing boat put out a little to permit the others to land, and as they approached the gate into the court they met the boy coming out.

"Tell me," said Antipas, eagerly stopping him, "who is that in the boat?"

"My master," replied the boy proudly.

"Do you work for him?" asked Antipas.

"No," said Bar-joses, "I work for old Zebedee, the

fisherman. I have just brought a basket of the fish with which he daily serves this house."

"Then why do you call that man your master?" persisted Antipas.

Bar-joses hesitated for a moment, then his eyes softened.

"Because whatever I do is for love of him," he said, and ran down to the quay.

That night when Antipas went to sleep his dreams were not of the white Arabian horse, but of the young man with the joyful eyes, whom the fisher boy loved.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW ANTIPAS AGAIN SAW THE LORD.

THE Passover journey was a marvelous experience to Antipas. Since his earliest childhood he had heard it described by his mother, his nurse, and the old bond servant, Myrza, who had served his father's father, and for love of his master had had his ear bored that he might serve no other master but him and his children. Since his earliest childhood Antipas had loved to picture what the journey would be like, but never in his happiest dreams had he come near to the reality.

To be one of the great company, ever swelling as the close-clustering Galilean villages one by one added its quota; to hear all the air ringing with the bursts of joyous music from drum and timbrel and flute, and the singing of the Hallel by hundreds of rapturous voices; to see the picturesque groups of people; the gaily-curtained litters and gilded chariots; the horsemen with their rich trappings and proud-stepping steeds; the camels and donkeys with their burdens of women and children and aged men; the long procession of people on foot in all the bright colors of holiday attire—all this was intensely interesting to Antipas. But the thing that impressed him most deeply was something that he had never thought of until old Myrza spoke of it at their first

halting-place—the fact that all these people had only one thought, one purpose, to go up to the Holy City to worship God. This fact profoundly impressed the boy.

Antipas had been taught all that the law required a boy of his age to know about religion, but his parents were not occupied with religious thoughts as were the family of Zebedee and the humble, pious circle which had gathered around the home of Jesus in Nazareth. They belonged to the court, and of necessity mixed much with a worldly class and with many who were not Jews at all. From all such associations they had carefully kept their son, but he had not grown up in a religious atmosphere, and now that for the first time he found himself in surroundings where religious things were the one subject of interest, it affected him deeply.

They travelled by way of Jezreel and Sychar—a way almost every foot of which is full of history. Riding sometimes in company with his father, sometimes beside his mother's litter, he heard all the well-known stories of ancient Israel retold in the very scenes where they had taken place.

Mount Tabor brought up the brave story of how Barak charged the hosts of Sisera while God in heaven fought for him, sending a great rain, so that

* Torrent Kishon swept them away,
Torrent of floods, torrent Kishon,

as the Canaanites fled westward to that narrow gorge where long afterwards Elijah slew the prophets of Baal.

* George Adam Smith's Translation.

Then there was Shunem, where the prophet Elisha gave back to the bereaved mother her only son—Joanna's voice grew very tender as she told that story; Gilboa, where Saul and Jonathan were slain; Shiloh, where stood the tabernacle, and where old Eli, heavy-hearted, waited by the gate for tidings of the ark of God; and Bethel, which Jacob found to be the very gate of heaven. At the sight of all these places his nation's history became more vivid to the boy, and his heart swelled with pride at the thought that, in spite of Idumean tetrarch and Roman emperor, Israel was still the peculiar people of God.

It was after noon on the third day, as they were faring up the long ascent that stretches southward from Bethel, when Antipas, riding beside his mother's litter, caught his first glimpse of Jerusalem, looming up in the dim distance like a phantom city in the clouds. A few moments later, and as its outlines became more distinct, the great company of pilgrims burst into songs of joy.

“Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem!
Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth,
Is Mount Zion, on the side of the north,
The city of the great King.
God hath made himself known in her palaces for a
refuge,”

they sang. Intense excitement took possession of the boy; he longed to press forward, to stand himself within the gates of the Holy City. Half-unconsciously he urged his horse forward, his eyes so fixed upon the lovely vision that he noticed nothing of where he was

going till, suddenly coming to himself, he observed that he had far outstripped the rest of his party. Drawing a little apart, he was gazing down the road by which he had come, in search of them, when he heard a voice at his side saying:

“Master, will the judgment of Israel begin at this feast-time?”

Turning quickly, Antipas saw a group of young men gazing toward Jerusalem. In their midst was a woman who might have been their mother—a woman of a beautiful countenance, though weary now perhaps from the journey. She, however, was not looking toward Jerusalem; her eyes were lifted with an expression of intense expectation to the face of a young man on whose arm she leaned; and as Antipas followed the direction of her gaze he saw to his surprise the face that he had seen in the fishing boat on the Lake of Galilee—that wonderful face with its expression of love and joy and power. Only now there was a look of mild reproof in his eyes as he turned to the youth who had asked the question and said in a voice, the music of which came back to Antipas’s memory many times after this:

“The Father sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might through Him be saved.”

The group had already moved forward. Antipas saw his father riding rapidly up the hill, looking about in search of him, and he hastened to meet him. And then as they rode forward his mind became absorbed in the glory and beauty of the Holy City, as by degrees he

could distinguish the towers and palaces sitting proudly upon her various hills, and most glorious of all, the temple, high on its rocky mount, a glittering mass of marble and gold.

As they entered the city and threaded its marble-paved streets on the way to the palace of Joanna's uncle Nicodemus, on Mount Zion, Antipas was much interested in observing the people in the varied dresses of many nations, for at the Passover time the Jews who were dispersed through all the countries of the world came in great multitudes to worship the Lord at Jerusalem. Every house was open to Passover pilgrims, and Antipas noticed that before many doors was hanging a curtain, which his father explained to him was a token that there was still room and a welcome for strangers. But in that lovely spring weather, with its glorious Passover full moon, very many preferred the greater freedom of the open air, and the streets and open places were filled with booths hastily made of mats and leaves, while preparations for the evening meal were going merrily forward on braziers or bonfires.

The next day, while Chuza was occupied with the purification necessary before he could partake of the Paschal meal, Antipas, who as yet was not under the yoke of the law, was taken by his great-uncle Nicodemus to the temple, which from the roof of Nicodemus's house he could see rising up like a majestic island from among a sea of palaces, towers, and trees that encircled it. They went by way of that "ascent into the house of God" that had made the Queen of Sheba faint

with admiration a thousand years before—the magnificent bridge that spans the deep Tyropæan Valley. Leaning over its parapet they could see the close-built houses and gardens more than two hundred feet below. The bridge led into the Royal Porch, one of the superb porticos that surround the vast temple enclosure, and through the cloisters formed by four rows of stately columns they entered the vast Court of the Gentiles, the outer court of the temple, in which there was room for two hundred thousand people. But to Antipas it did not seem imposing; with all its splendor of marble and gold it appeared rather like a great market-place, for hundreds of oxen and sheep were there, and men around them bargaining and buying; other men were hawking doves from wicker baskets, and all along the porticos were little tables where money-changers were exchanging the half-shekel of the sanctuary for the foreign coins of the visitors from abroad. The heat, the foul odors, the noises, lowing, bleating, cooing, with the shrill voices of chafferers and money-changers, entirely destroyed the feeling of awe with which the boy had approached the holy and beautiful house. He looked at his great-uncle in distress.

“It is pity, I know,” said Nicodemus, “but after all it is a great convenience, especially to those who come from a far distance, whose foreign money, stamped with the idolatrous effigies of kings or emperors, may not be given for the temple tax, and who must needs make certain that the beasts they purchase for the sacrifice are ceremonially clean. But it is none the better because the

priests derive great profit from the sale of this privilege," he added as if to himself.

They made their way through the noisy scene and up a flight of steps through "The Beautiful Gate" that led into the large inner court beyond which no woman might go. The court was full of people, but it was very quiet, and once more the boy's heart grew reverent as his uncle led him across the pavement and up the steps that led into the long, narrow Court of Israel. From here they could plainly see the court of the priests, with its great altar of unhewn stones, from which the smoke of sacrifice rose morning after morning and evening after evening, and upon which on the morrow no fewer than one hundred and twenty thousand lambs would be offered. And beyond, on a higher terrace, was the temple itself, the holy place of the Most High, a building of surpassing magnificence and beauty. The soul of Antipas came into his eyes as he gazed upon it in awe.

Going back to the Court of the Women, Nicodemus led the boy through one of its gates that led out upon a terrace commanding a wide view of the surrounding country, passing along to that part of it where during the feast days the members of the high court, the Sanhedrin, sat to answer the questions of any who might wish to ask them of matters of the law.

Many of the venerable men there were so famous for learning, and especially for piety, that even Antipas had heard their names in far-off Galilee; but after listening a little to their discourse he found it tedious, and was glad when his uncle led him away. "I don't suppose



JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

I'm old enough to understand them yet," he said, half apologetically, as they walked along the terrace toward the Beautiful Gate.

"No," replied Nicodemus, "it is not interesting to boys like you; and yet," he added musingly, "I remember one boy who found it so interesting that he came day after day."

Nicodemus stood still, looking away into the distance, until the curiosity of Antipas was aroused to say, "Who was it, uncle?"

"It was long ago," replied the old man, seating himself upon a stone bench and beckoning to Antipas to seat himself beside him, "long ago, and yet I remember it as if it were yesterday. A marvelous child, not older than you, Antipas, who, during a Paschal season, came day after day to the terrace where we sat, listening to what we said with an interest that was startling, and sometimes putting a question that showed a knowledge of the Scriptures and a depth of thought that were more startling still. I have often wondered what became of him; surely he was born for no common lot."

"What was he like?" asked Antipas with interest.

"He was a boy of beautiful countenance," replied his uncle, "sturdy and strong, yet with a look of wondrous innocence upon his face, like a little child who knows nothing of evil. And there was about him an air of divine surprise," the old man went on musingly. "I never saw it in any other face, but I could fancy that so young Jacob looked when he had seen the angels going up and down the ladder of God, or Daniel when the

Archangel Gabriel, being caused to fly swiftly, touched him about the time of the evening oblation."

"Have you ever seen him since, uncle?" asked the boy.

"Never; though I have often looked for him. He must be a full-grown man now, for it was nearly a score of years ago; yet I am sure I should know him if I saw him, for never was there such a look in any other boy's face. He seemed so full of joy, Antipas, a joy that was not playfulness, such as other boys have—you, for instance, my son—but as if he had a fountain of happiness within himself."

Suddenly, Antipas could not have told why, a vision passed before him of another face that he had lately seen, a face that bore upon it the sign of a deep inward joy. "What became of the boy, Uncle Nicodemus?" he asked.

"A strange thing happened: when he had been coming several days a man and woman appeared in great agitation, and exclaimed that they had been seeking for him everywhere in deep anxiety. I shall never forget the look of grave surprise that came into his face, nor the tone in which he asked, 'How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' 'His Father's house!' Doubtless Jehovah is our Father, and it seemed to me no strange thing that that brave, joyous boy should feel himself especially akin to Him. Ah, well, it would be interesting to know what has become of him. It seemed to me he was likely to make his mark in the world." And Nicodemus rose from his seat and walked on.

CHAPTER X.

HOW THE LORD GAVE A SIGN.

As they reached the top of the fourteen broad steps that led down into the Court of the Gentiles, Nicodemus uttered an exclamation of surprise, for something strange was taking place. There was confusion in that great enclosure among the cattle-dealers and money-changers, and agitation everywhere. And suddenly there seemed to be a wild stampede, men and cattle fleeing tumultuously toward the gates before one man—a young man, armed only with a whip of rushes. When he reached the portico, still driving them before him, he stopped to overturn the tables of the money-changers, pouring out the money upon the ground, while their owners, seized with a great fear, did not wait to gather up so much as a single coin but fled away in terror. And yet, intense and stormy as seemed to be the displeasure of the young man, Nicodemus observed that he had not lost his self-command. When he came to the sellers of doves he spoke quietly to them, and being now within hearing distance, Antipas heard him say, “Take these things away ; do not make my Father’s house a house of merchandise ?”

Old Nicodemus, who had been watching him very intently, started at these words and exclaimed to Antipas,

“‘My Father’s house!’ the very words of that remarkable boy of whom I told you! What can it mean? Why does the chief of the temple guard permit this? Why does not he call upon his police? And yet I know not—is not this the day we have been looking for? Hasten, Antipas, carry word of what has happened to the rabbis on the terrace; we must inquire into the meaning of this strange sign!”

Surprised though Antipas was by all that he had seen, he was even more surprised by its effect upon the rabbis. With startled glances at one another, they rose and hastened to the great court. They found it strangely quiet. Not an echo remained of the unseemly sounds that had so lately profaned it; the multitudes who had come up to worship were gathered in groups of threes or fours, talking with intense but subdued agitation, while he who had created all the turmoil stood motionless in the midst of the court as if plunged in deep thought. Three or four young men, evidently from the country, were respectfully grouped behind him.

“What is the meaning of this sign?” asked Nicodemus of the rabbis as they gathered around him. He had no need to add anything to his hasty message by Antipas, for the silent court told the rest.

“It is the sign given us by the prophet Malachi,” exclaimed a young rabbi in eager, rapid words, “Messiah coming suddenly to his temple; what other would it be?”

“Nay, Rabbi Joseph, you are too hasty,” said a venerable man, whom, from his imposing manner and mag-

nificent dress, Antipas knew to be the high priest. "That young man has about him none of the awful splendor of the Messiah at His coming. Who is he, indeed? Can no one tell?"

There was no answer, but it seemed to Antipas that many of the rabbis thought that Rabbi Joseph might be right, and that this must be the Messiah. The boy went softly down the steps that he might look more nearly upon this strange purifier of the temple; and then a sudden thrill of awed delight ran through him, for the young man turned his face full upon him, and Antipas recognized him of the joyous eyes whom he had seen on the Lake of Galilee. Only now his eyes were not exactly joyous. They were full of an intense expectation. As they fell upon Antipas they seemed to say to him, "Who do you say that I am?" and with a sudden leap of heart he exclaimed, "Messiah, it is Messiah!" He spoke in a low voice out of respect to the rabbis, who were not far off, but the young man had heard, and he looked at Antipas with an expression of love and approbation that the boy never forgot. His lips moved, and Antipas heard him murmur softly, "I thank Thee, O Father, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes."

And now with eager expectation Antipas saw the rabbis and rulers approach the young man. He expected to see them bow before him and hail him as the Messiah. He expected that the kingdom of God would be at once set up there in His holy temple, and that every one would hasten to call this wonderful young man king.

His heart beat almost to suffocation. His ears were ringing, his lips parted in readiness to join in the glad shouts that must in a moment rise.

But no; a few words were exchanged; some of the rabbis seemed almost to sneer at the stranger, who answered them calmly but with majesty. Then he turned quietly away, and with his few young followers passed around to the left of the Court of the Women and disappeared. The priests and rabbis began to talk vehemently among themselves, but Nicodemus did not join in their conversation; he stood apart perplexed, and when finally he beckoned Antipas to him and they went away together there was no sign anywhere of the young man and his friends.

Antipas hoped that his uncle would explain what it all meant, but Nicodemus kept silence, and a strange sense of awe kept the boy silent also. Yet in his heart there was a deep joy because of the look of love and approbation he had received from the unknown young man. And if he was not the Messiah, who could he be?

CHAPTER XI.

HOW DEVOUT MEN AND WOMEN ASKED THE MEANING OF THE SIGN.

THE sacredly joyful feast days passed on. The Passover supper had been eaten, and upon Antipas had devolved the duty, as youngest child in his great-uncle's household, of asking, at a certain moment during the feast, "What mean we by this service?" And Nicodemus, as oldest in the family, had answered with the story of the passing over of the Israelitish houses by the death-angel in the destruction of the first-born of Egypt, and of Israel's deliverance from the land of bondage on that awful night. Then there had been the attendance on the early morning service; the thrilling moment when the priest went in to burn incense before the Lord, while every person in the great congregation was bent to the ground in silent adoration; and after that the offering for the Passover burnt-offering of more than a hundred and twenty thousand lambs upon the great altar, the smoke of which did not cease to go up all that day.

The first two days of the feast were chiefly devoted to religious services, though even then there was much of family festivity in the house of Nicodemus, and indeed in all the houses of Jerusalem. After these two days,

visiting and sociability began, and Antipas made a number of new acquaintances among the children of his parents' friends.

One of the most memorable of these visits was in a house where there were no children. It was not in Jerusalem, but in a pleasant village named Bethany, less than two miles away. They went there one fine afternoon—a long walk through the deep, palm-shaded valley of Kedron and around the shoulder of the Mount of Olives. The house they were to visit was one of the best in the village, built about a large court, with a beautiful fountain in the centre and palms and many flowers growing around it.

Antipas had heard his father say that they were going to the house of Simon; but it seemed that Simon himself was not at home, for only Lazarus, a young man of twenty-two or three, and his two sisters appeared to give them welcome. And when Simon's name was mentioned they looked sad and tears came into the eyes of Mary, the younger sister. Martha, the elder sister, was a dignified woman, a few years older than Lazarus, and Mary was several years younger. Mary undertook to make things pleasant for Antipas, as no other children were there when he arrived.

"But you will soon have a more suitable playfellow than I," said the young girl, smiling, when they had left the elders of the company seated in grave conversation in the "upper chamber" and strayed away to another part of the roof where they could talk more at ease. "There is a very nice boy expected here this evening."

“What is his name, and how old is he?” asked Antipas.

“His name is Mark, and he lives with his father and mother in a house that you must have passed to come here, on a slope of Mount Zion as you go down into the Valley of the Cheesemongers,” replied Mary. “He is older than you, but not much; about fourteen, I think.”

There was a little bustle of new arrivals, and among them Antipas saw a boy that he knew must be Mark. Mary brought him to Antipas and shortly left them together.

“You live in Capernaum, don’t you?” asked Mark. “My mother has friends there, a fisherman named Simon and his wife. Simon always comes to our house for the Passover, and this year he has brought such nice friends with him, Jesus of Nazareth and his mother.”

“Do you like to have Passover pilgrims at your house?” asked Antipas.

“That depends; they are not always very nice, though mother says that the stranger always brings a blessing, especially if he is a poor man.”

“Yes,” said Antipas, “‘whenever a poor man stands at the door, the Holy One, blessed be His name, stands at his right hand.’”

“Where did you learn that?” asked Mark, who had just begun to study the teachings of the rabbis, and was surprised to hear a boy so much younger than himself quote from them.

“I have often heard my father repeat it,” replied Antipas. “Is Jesus of Nazareth a poor man?”

“He must be, if your saying is true,” replied Mark, “for surely the Holy One is at his right hand. Antipas, I wish you could see him. There is something about him that makes you love him; and he seems always so happy—not amusing, you know, but just as if he knew some joyful thing. And he talks differently from any one I ever heard before; sometimes he tells a little story that makes you think; for it is almost always to show what the kingdom of heaven is like.”

“The kingdom of heaven!” repeated Antipas. “They have been talking so much about that at my Uncle Nicodemus’s house. He wants to live to see it, he says. But I should think one so old would not like the fighting.”

“My mother thinks,” said Mark, “that when the Messiah comes there will not be any fighting; for the Messiah will be of such awful majesty that even the Romans will not dare oppose him. But I don’t see how that can be. The Romans are not afraid of anybody, and they won’t give up the dominion for nothing. I am sure there must be fighting.”

“He could make even the Romans give up without fighting if he was like a man who was in the temple the other day,” began Antipas, but Mark interrupted him.

“Did you hear about that? Why, that was Jesus!”

“What!” exclaimed Antipas. “Do you know him? Oh, don’t you think he must be a real king? Did you not see how they all obeyed him, those who sold oxen, and even the money-changers? It seemed that he had only to look at them and they obeyed.”

“Were you there? Did you see him? Oh, I’d give anything to have been there then! What was it like?” asked Mark, the words tumbling over one another in his eagerness.

Antipas tried to describe, and Mark kept asking questions till they were summoned to supper, when the conversation was left to the grown people.

But they too, it seemed, were talking of that strange event in the temple, and when the company learned from Mark’s mother, Mary, that she had as guest in her own house the young man who had cleansed the temple of the unseemly traffic that had so long profaned it they were intensely interested. Nicodemus especially asked many questions about him. All present agreed that he had done a brave deed, for they were all truly religious people, to whom the profanation of the temple had seemed a grievous thing.

“What do you think is the meaning of his act?” asked Lazarus.

“It seems difficult to give it more than one meaning,” replied the old rabbi, “and yet there is a strange absence in this young man of all we have been wont to expect in the Messiah—no pomp, no majesty, no military following. Though I ought not to say ‘no majesty’ when I remember how they all obeyed his command, unsupported as it was by anything except the might of his own countenance.”

“You need only to live in the house with him a little while,” said Mark’s mother, “to cease to wonder that men obey him. I have never seen a man more gentle,

and yet it seems as if he had only to command and we should all obey him. Not because we fear his anger, but because he rules our hearts."

There was a little silence after these words until Lazarus said: "I must know this young man. I feel strongly drawn to him by what you say. And if it should indeed prove that he is the Messiah, though he has not come in the pomp and majesty that we expected, should we not still rejoice and be willing to accept his way as the right way?"

"Are you sure," asked Chuza, "that the cleansing of the temple was not just what we ought to have expected? Can the mountain of the house of Jehovah appear established on the tops of the mountains, as the prophet has said, while such defiling practices are going on within it, and the very priests of the sanctuary gaining large revenues by permitting this profanation? I have never come up to a feast that my soul has not been moved to indignation within me at the sight."

"They tell me," said Mark's mother, "that he refused a sign to the priests when they asked it. Is that so?"

"Unless his very act had been a sign," observed Lazarus.

"Since that day he has done things that seem to me like signs," Mark's mother went on. "Does not the prophet say of the Messiah, 'Himself bore our sicknesses'? He has visited several houses of suffering in our neighborhood, and already the sick are well. I don't know what method he uses. I have not felt at liberty to ask him. There is that in his eye, lovely and winning as he is, that forbids questionings."

“Healing the sick,” observed Joanna; “perhaps he does it as the prophets and elders of old used to do in the days when Jehovah was more evidently with His people—by laying his hands upon them and praying to Jehovah for their recovery.”

“No,” said Chuza, answering Mary, “I do not think you could call that a Messianic sign, though it surely shows him to be a prophet; and perhaps that is all we should see in his cleansing of the temple. One thing there is no question about—he is not like common men.”

“He is no common man,” said Nicodemus emphatically. “No man can do the signs that he has done except God be with him.”

As the visitors from Jerusalem walked home together in the glorious light of the Passover moon, just a little past the full, their talk all the way was of Jesus. It seemed to Antipas that Mark was of all boys the most to be envied, to be living for a whole week under the same roof with him; and both the boys ardently hoped that it would be found that he really was the Messiah.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW ANTIPAS FELL ILL AND WAS WONDROUSLY HEALED.

THE great event was over and Antipas was again at home, but he was not quite the same boy that had set forth two weeks before, proudly mounted on his white Arabian. The first sight of the Holy City, with the first experience of a great feast, was likely, indeed, to be the turning-point in the life of every wide-awake, well-taught Israelitish boy; but this had been no ordinary feast. That strange scene in the temple was not like anything that had ever happened before; people had been talking about it everywhere and wondering what it could mean, wondering if, indeed, that brave and singular young man could be the Messiah. To be sure, the priests and doctors of the law had not said that he was, and they ought to know; but Antipas could not help thinking that his great-uncle believed that this was he whom the nation was eagerly expecting. But whether or not the young man was the Messiah, he was very brave and very full of power. Antipas thought that he should like to have him for a friend; and surely he had done a good thing in clearing the temple of all that had so defiled that sacred place. The more Antipas thought of him, the more he felt his heart drawn to him, and loving him, he could not but believe in him.

He had talked a good deal with his mother about this, but she had not quite agreed with him. She was inclined to think, with her husband, that this Jesus of Nazareth was a young man of deep piety and great zeal for the holiness of God's house, and that his zeal and a remarkable strength of character had given him power, by a sudden bold act, to overawe the traffickers in the temple court. And now, she said to Antipas gently but quite emphatically, it would be better to put all these matters out of his mind and give diligent attention to his studies, for these were the important interest of a boy of his age. Neither father nor mother thought it well to suggest to the boy their belief that if Jesus really was the Messiah, Herod would soon lose his power and Chuza his honorable position and great wealth. For indeed they were too high-minded to consider their private interests where such a thing as Messiah's kingdom was concerned. And Antipas obeyed his mother to the best of his ability. Only sometimes when they were sailing on the lake, or when he was riding on his white Arabian, that face would come up before him, full of love and joy as he had seen it in the fisher-boat, or full of power and indignation as he had seen it in the temple court, and he longed to see Jesus again.

So the long, hot summer passed away and the mild winter of the lake of Galilee drew near. Antipas had never once seen Jesus, though he was always hoping that he might. Sometimes on the lake he saw in one of the fisher-boats the boy whom he had seen with Jesus, and with whom he had afterward spoken, and he resolved to make an opportunity to speak to him again.

Not many days later the boy came to the house with fish just as Antipas was going out to ride, and after that Antipas so managed that they might often meet. For Bar-joses, it appeared, could often bring news of Jesus, because his master's sons were with him. None of the party had come home after the Passover; they had gone to some part of Judea near the river Jordan. There Jesus was teaching the people who came to him about the kingdom of heaven, and his disciples, the young men whom Antipas had seen clustered around him in the temple, were baptizing those who believed that Jesus was the Messiah and that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Antipas wished with all his heart that he might go to the Jordan and hear Jesus preach and be baptized, and he spoke of it to his mother; but she told him that if this was all true and the kingdom really at hand, he could not better fit himself for it than by doing the duties that God had given him to do. And Antipas felt that his mother must be right in this.

Very soon something intensely interesting happened—the prophet John the Baptist came to Galilee and was for a long time in Tiberias and even in Capernaum, preaching not only to the common people but to the Tetrarch Herod himself. Antipas had been brought up to hold Herod in very great respect, his father being one of Herod's highest officers; but now he could not help learning that the Tetrarch was not a good man, but in some respects at least a very bad one, for every one was talking about the prophet's great bravery in rebuking Herod's sins to his very face. And then, to the horror

of Antipas, he heard that the prophet had been shut up in prison, in the gloomy castle of Machærus far away, as a punishment for daring to rebuke Herod's sins. It seemed to Antipas very dreadful that a monarch should do a cowardly or a revengeful thing.

After this Antipas heard nothing more, for he fell very ill with a dangerous fever. Everything was done for him that his parents could devise or money could buy; his mother, his old nurse, Mirza the faithful bondman, watched over him night and day; the most noted physicians of Capernaum and Tiberias were sent for; his father came to him as often as his court duties permitted, and would hang over him with a gaze of deep distress, or, turning away, would cover his head with his tallith and, bowing himself almost to the ground, pray long and earnestly for the life of his only son. But of this Antipas knew at last nothing; for he was lying in a deathly stupor.

It was the gray dawn of a December morning. Antipas's mother was sitting by his bedside looking upon him with a face of anguish, his old nurse on the other side of the cot was trying to force a healing potion between his lips, his father was praying in agony too great for words, when old Mirza stole softly in. He looked at the boy and sighed, then, approaching his mistress, he said in a low voice:

“The prophet has returned to Galilee.”

“The Baptist?” she asked. “Has he escaped from prison?”

“Not he, but one of whom he testified that he was

greater than himself—Jesus of Nazareth, who cleansed the temple on the feast day. O mistress! I heard that while he was in Jerusalem he healed many sick; the fame of his cures went out through all the region. And now he has returned and is, they say, at Cana.”

The mother's pale face shone with hope. “Tell your master, Mirza,” she whispered. He waited respectfully till Chuza removed the tallith from his head, then told him of Jesus' return to Galilee and of the fame that had gone before him, so great that even a fisherman who had just come to bring some of his night's catch had been able to talk of nothing else. Chuza listened for a minute, then said: “Make ready my horse, Mirza, as quickly as possible. I will go to him, wherever he may be. We will leave no hope untried.”

He stopped only a moment to look upon his boy, kissed his wife, and heard her whisper, “The God of Jacob grant thee thy heart's desire,” and then he went away.

The mother betook herself to prayer, asking only that her child's life might be spared until the prophet could arrive. She thought of a mother in Shunem, long, long ago, whose son a prophet, with a great effort of God-given power, had won back to life, and of that widow of Zarephath to whom a greater prophet had restored her son from death; and she prayed that things might not come to so dreadful an extremity, for she could not hope that the young prophet of Nazareth could work such miracles as these.

So she sat hour after hour and prayed, while that dear

life was ebbing away. Noonday passed, the old nurse had given up trying to force the potion between the rigid lips, and knelt motionless, waiting to receive the last breath. Faithful old Mirza stood beside her; other servants had clustered in the doorway to wait upon the last moments of their master's only son, whose breathing was now so faint that every fluttering sigh seemed likely to be the last.

Suddenly the boy's eyes opened, and he spoke in a voice weak but clear. "I am getting better, mother, am I not?" he asked.

She could hardly believe her ears. She laid her hand upon his brow; the fever was all gone that only a few minutes ago had seemed to be burning his life away. The boy spoke more naturally than he had done for several days—could it be just the last flaring up of the candle before it went out for ever?

But no, he continued to grow better. In a little while he wanted to rise, and, between joy and fear of a relapse, the trembling mother helped him dress and drew him down beside her on the divan, her arms fast locked about him. And then she suddenly bethought her that there was no need to trouble the prophet, and that it would be good to relieve the father's anxious heart.

She at once despatched two servants in the direction of Cana, where, as Mirza told her, the prophet had been staying; and in the early evening, worn with many nights of watching, she went to her own room and sank to sleep with a prayer of thankfulness upon her lips.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW CHUZA LEARNED THAT JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH.

ANTIPAS's father had ridden away from Capernaum with a heavy heart, for he knew it was next to impossible that he should ever again see his boy alive. He urged his horse forward as fast as he dared up the long hills that lie between the lake and the village of Cana, and it was not yet the first hour after noon when he reached his journey's end. The first person he met directed him to the house of Nathanael, where Jesus was lodging, and Chuza found him sitting in the court, with several happy children about him, listening to his stories.

The nobleman threw himself off his horse, and almost falling at Jesus' feet he implored him to return with him to heal his son. He had heard much of the kindness of Jesus, and expected him to be all readiness to help, so that it was with amazed impatience that he saw the prophet sitting still, with the children leaning against his knee, only saying with a sorrowful look, "Except you see signs and wonders you will not believe." To the anxious father it seemed cruel that one of whom he had asked help should only talk of such a thing as believing. What he wanted was that his son should be saved. He had set out to seek Jesus only as a last re-



A HILLY ROAD IN PALESTINE.

sort, with very little hope that it would do any good, and yet it seemed to him now that everything depended upon this prophet going to his boy. He could not stop to discuss the question of belief; he almost interrupted Jesus with the agonized entreaty, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"

A strange expression came into Jesus' face—an expression of great joy as well as of commanding power. He gazed upon Chuza for a moment, and then said in a voice so sweet and gentle that to the father it seemed as if an angel spoke, "Go back home; your son lives." Like a great rush it came over Chuza that every one of this man's words must be true; if he said the boy would live, there could be no doubt of it. Believe? Yes, indeed, he did believe, and with one look of speechless gratitude and trust he turned and went away.

His horse was tired and must rest, but at the earliest possible moment Chuza was in the saddle, hastening down the steep road toward Capernaum. The sun went down and a new day began before he had made half the distance, but he still pressed on. Suddenly he heard the sound of hoof beats, and two of his own servants rode up.

"The boy?" he gasped. "He lives!" they both exclaimed. "Yesterday about the seventh hour the fever left him."

The very hour! At one o'clock the day before, according to the Jews' reckoning from evening to evening, Jesus had said, "Your son lives!" and it was so. From this moment Chuza never doubted that Jesus was in-

deed the Messiah. There was no longer need of haste. What Jesus had begun he would surely finish. At the nearest village Chuza stopped for the night, and slept without a thought of anxiety. And when early next morning he reached his house, what joy to find the dear child not the pale corpse he had dreaded to see, but the same bright boy he had been before his illness, a little pale, perhaps, from long confinement, but really well. And when the father told the wonderful story to Antipas and his mother and to the servants who gathered at the door to hear, what could they all do but believe?

"I was sure he was the Messiah," said Antipas with a happy smile. "And I believe that he has saved my life that I may be his soldier when I am grown."

"God grant me an opportunity to serve him!" said Joanna with streaming eyes; and then Chuza rose, and they all stood with bowed and covered heads while Chuza prayed, in the words of the synagogue service:

"Blessed be the Lord our God and the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God; the Most High God who showeth mercy and kindness, who createth all things, who remembereth the gracious promises to the fathers and bringeth a Saviour to their children's children, for His own name's sake in love, O King, Helper, Saviour, and Shield! Blessed art thou, O Jehovah, the Shield of Abraham!"

And Antipas sat down beside his parents at the noon-day meal. He was almost too happy to eat, so warm was the love of Jesus, his Saviour, in his heart.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW THE LORD CAME UNTO HIS OWN AND HIS OWN
RECEIVED HIM NOT.

LITTLE JANNA'S father had been all the time getting worse instead of better since their removal to Capernaum, and before the winter came he was quite helpless with the palsy, unable even to move about, still less to tend the little shop. All Ruth's time and strength were needed to take care of him and wait on customers, and she was very glad when Mary of Nazareth, the mother of Jesus, who had been in Capernaum visiting her sister Salome, Zebedee's wife, asked leave to take little Janna home with her. Janna was very willing to go, but it was a disappointment to the child to find that Jesus was not in Nazareth. Though he had not seen him for many months, the heart of little Janna was very true to his dear friend.

One Friday afternoon Mary took him to see Nathan, the boy whose home faced on the court where Janna used to live. Poor Nathan was epileptic, and often suffered very much, but there were times when he was better, and then, though he was much older, he loved to play with Janna, who was more gentle than the bigger boys. This afternoon, while they were playing together, and Mary, sitting under the grapevine, was talk-

ing with Nathan's mother, his father, Obed, came up and stood a little while listening. Then he said: "I was in Capernaum a few days ago, and all the town was ringing with a cure they said Jesus of Nazareth had performed."

"My Jesus!" exclaimed Mary. "What was it, Obed?"

"Why, they may believe it who can," replied Obed with a sneer, "but they say he healed of a dangerous fever the son of Chuza, Herod's chamberlain."

Mary looked eagerly at Obed, while his wife said: "Jesus heal any one? Why, he's not a doctor!"

"And what's more," Obed went on with a mocking smile, "healed him without going near him, when he was away up here in Cana."

"Oh, but that's impossible, Obed," said his wife, "the people who told you that can't have been telling the truth."

Mary had looked from one to the other without speaking, but a great light shone in her eyes. She might have spoken, but at that moment poor Nathan fell down upon the ground in one of his fits, and as his mother had kindled a fire on the ground to cook the Sabbath supper, the boy fell into it and would have been badly burned if his father had not quickly snatched him up. The poor boy was writhing and foaming at the mouth in awful agony, and it was a long time before, with all their efforts, he could find relief. When at last the paroxysm passed over and Nathan lay limp and exhausted upon the divan, Obed turned to Mary and said,

“When I see your son heal my poor boy I’ll believe he has the power he pretends to have, but not before.”

Mary did not answer this, for at that moment a long trumpet blast sounded loud. It was from the roof of the synagogue minister’s house, warning the people that the Sabbath was drawing nigh. Calling little Janna to her, Mary hastened home.

“Mother Mary,” asked Janna as they went, “if Jesus made the boy well in Capernaum, couldn’t he cure Nathan too?”

“Perhaps he could,” she answered.

To their great joy they found Jesus in the house, for he had walked over the hills from Cana, which was only five miles away. Mary hastened to set out the festive Sabbath meal, and when the trumpet sounded a second time she lit the Sabbath lamp. Then the third trumpet sounded, and the Sabbath had actually begun, the holy time especially consecrated to family joy and to the worship of God. Every one of Mary’s household was in his Sabbath clothes and prepared to enjoy the Sabbath good cheer, that seemed doubly good because Jesus was there to share it.

That was a very happy family around the table. The four younger brothers of Jesus were there, and his two sisters, who were married and had their own homes near by, and who came over as soon as they heard of his arrival. But little Janna thought no one could be so glad as he. He kept close to his friend, and was perfectly happy when Jesus took him in his arms and set him on his knee while he talked with the others of the

things that had happened ever since the Passover, many months before.

He had been teaching in various parts of Judea, and a great many people had come to hear him. James and John, Simon and Andrew, Philip and Nathanael, had all spent a part at least of the time with him, and it was only since Jesus had returned to Galilee that they had all gone back to their fishing on the lake or their other work. As for him, he had been preaching in the synagogues of the Galilean villages through which he passed on his way home. "Jesus preach!" thought little Janna, with a feeling of pride. He looked up and met the eyes of Jesus, fixed on him in love. Though there was so much to talk about, he never forgot the little boy.

Very early the next day the whole family were on the way to the synagogue, walking very fast, as the custom was, to show how eager they were to get there. Going home they would walk very slowly, as if sorry to leave the place of worship, for this was the commandment of the rabbis.

Janna went up with Mary to the women's gallery, but peeping down he saw Nathan sitting beside his father, and Jesus and his brothers in another part of the synagogue, and the ruler of the synagogue stopping to speak with Jesus before taking his seat with the other elders, directly before the ark in which the rolls of the sacred Scriptures were kept.

The service began: prayers and the recitation of the Shema (*Hear, O Israel*, Deut. x. 4), which little Janna

knew, and the reading of the Scriptures in Hebrew, translated by an interpreter into the Aramaic language, for that was the language which every one spoke in Palestine at that time. The reading took a good while, for six persons read, one after another, and little Janna had begun to feel sleepy, when suddenly he found himself wide awake, for Jesus had gone up the steps and was standing in front of the ark to read from the prophets.

Even Janna understood the short passage which Jesus read :

The Spirit of Jehovah is upon me,
Because Jehovah hath anointed me.
To preach good tidings unto the meek hath He sent me,
To bind up the broken-hearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And deliverance to them that are bound ;
To proclaim the acceptable year of Jehovah."

When Jesus had read the portion through, he rolled up the roll of the prophet and gave it to the attendant and sat down, as was the custom, and began to preach.

He told them that the glorious time that he had been reading about had come ; that he was the Messiah, and the time for the kingdom of God was the present time. But he did not say anything about being a king and driving away the Romans and making the Jews a great nation and giving them dominion over the whole world, which was what they all expected the Messiah to do ; instead of that he said that he had come to make the blind see, and to free men from the bondage of sin, just as Jewish bond servants went free from their masters in

the year of jubilee, after fifty years of servitude; and that in the Messiah's reign every one would be free from sin, and kind to one another, all living together in the generous spirit of the year of jubilee.

His words were so beautiful and he drew such a delightful picture of the love and peace and unselfishness and holiness which would prevail in God's kingdom, that it made even Janna glad, though he didn't half realize what it meant. And when Jesus finished, every one seemed touched and happy; they wondered at the kindness of his teachings, and that he said nothing of the terrible things that they had thought must happen when the Messiah came. But while they were hanging upon his gracious words, suddenly a sneering voice exclaimed, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

Every one looked around. It was Obed, who was gazing about with a mocking smile. His exclamation gave a disagreeable check to those who had been listening with delight to Jesus' words. Janna saw that they began to whisper among themselves, and then Obed said, "Why doesn't he do in his own country the things he does in Capernaum? Ask him that?"

But before any one had time to ask him, Jesus spoke of that very thing, telling them that those who wanted the benefits of the kingdom must believe in the Messiah, and accept his authority. And then he told two Bible stories that Janna already knew, about Elijah and Elisha, who did their wonderful cures, not in their own country for their own people, but in foreign lands, and on those who were not Jews, but who believed the prophets' teachings.

At this Obed sprang up with a great shout that he would not believe so long as his son was not cured; and then every one jumped up, crying, "Yes, yes; perform a miracle, a miracle!" and when Jesus sat motionless they rushed upon him. Janna, trembling, hid his face in Mary's skirts; but presently his love for his dear friend made him brave, and he looked out again. A great many men had seized Jesus and were dragging him down the steps and out of the synagogue.

"Oh come, Mother Mary, come!" cried Janna. "They are hurting Jesus! Let us go with him!"

Jesus' mother did not need to be asked twice. She made her way down stairs, and there she found her younger sons waiting for her, while a howling crowd was following those who had dragged Jesus away. Leaning upon the arm of her son James, and followed by the others, Mary hastened after them, little Janna clinging to her hand.

"They are dragging him to the precipice!" exclaimed James as they hurried on, panting. "Can they mean to throw him over it?"

Yes, that was just what they meant. On one side of the high plain on which Nazareth is built there is a steep precipice, and toward it they were dragging Jesus. In their fury the crowd jostled and hindered one another, so that Mary and her companions reached the place almost as soon as they. There they saw that just as the mob were about to push Jesus off the height he turned and gazed upon them, with a look so commanding that their hands fell away from him. He said not

a word, but only looked again, and in awe at something they saw in his face they fell back. He took a few steps forward, and the crowd parted and fell away on the right and on the left, making a narrow passage for him. And so, without a word, he walked through the midst of them, and turning toward the hill that overlooked the city, the hill where he had loved to play when he was a boy, he went slowly out of their sight.

“Where is he going?” asked his brother James.

“I know,” said Janna, “he told me once that he went up on the mountain to pray to God.”

“Yes, and there he will probably stay all night,” said Mary, “for prayer is what he lives by. But, James, I do not think that Nazareth is the place for us to live in now. I think we would better go to Capernaum, where they have received Jesus and are willing to listen to him.”

“I am ready,” said James, “and my brothers too, I am sure. We will stand by Jesus, you know, mother, though I don’t see the need of his preaching that way; I can’t think he can be the Messiah, can you?”

Mary did not answer, but her eyes looked as if she knew he was the Messiah.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW SIMON PETER LEARNED THAT HE WAS A SINFUL MAN.

ANTIPAS thought that he had never felt so well in all his life as since he had been wondrously cured of his fever. The very day after the fever left him he was able to go out of doors and take up his studies again. Still his parents thought it best for him not to study much for a time, and so it happened that he was mostly out of doors those days, riding his Arabian or sailing in one of his father's pleasure boats.

His thoughts were much on Jesus, who had made him well; he longed to see him and thank him; he longed to do something to show him how he loved him. And as Bar-joses, the fisher boy, knew more about Jesus' movements than any one else whom Antipas knew, he went one morning down to the place where the fishing boats came in, in hope of finding him and asking some questions.

As he drew near he saw that the shore of the lake was crowded with people, all quiet and apparently listening to some one who was talking. With a great leap of heart, Antipas thought that it must be Jesus, and he hastened on, trying to push through the crowd. Then there was a little stir; he managed to work his way to the front, and saw that Jesus had got into one of the

fishing boats and two fishermen were pushing it off a little from the shore. Before he had time to be disappointed the anchor dropped, and Jesus, sitting in the stern of the vessel where he could easily be seen and heard by all on shore, began again to teach. "The time was fulfilled," he said, for which the nation had been waiting so long; the Messiah was now among them; the kingdom was at hand; and in a voice of sweetest urgency he begged them to repent of their sins and believe the good tidings he brought them.

Then he began to teach them what the kingdom of heaven was like; and Antipas, listening, learned that it was not to be set up by fighting the Romans and putting down the enemies of Israel, but by believing in Jesus, and being at peace with God through forgiven sin, and serving one another in the love of God. The boy did not understand at all, it was so different from what he had been taught. Yet in his heart he felt, "Yes, that is what I want to do and to be," and more and more he loved him who was speaking, who had been his own saviour from death.

Like other boys, Antipas knew the secret of getting to the front of a crowd, and long before Jesus had finished speaking he was on the water's edge, not a stone's throw from the boat. More than once his eye met that of Jesus, and his heart leaped with joy at the glance of interest and helpfulness that he gave him. But now Jesus had finished his teaching, and he turned to the two fishermen, who were, in fact, Simon and Andrew, though Antipas did not know them, and

said, "Launch out now, and let down your nets for a draught."

Antipas heard the answer, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the nets."

"And they'll catch something, too," said a voice near Antipas. He turned and saw Bar-joses.

"Yes," Antipas replied. "Of course they will if Jesus tells them to."

"You know him now," said Bar-joses with a delighted expression; "it was you he healed, wasn't it? Everybody is talking about it."

"Yes, he healed me, but I don't know him to speak to," said Antipas. "I would give all I have, my Arabian and all, to sit in a boat with him as you did that night."

"And I wouldn't take all you've got to give up knowing him and being with him now and then," said Bar-joses. "I would rather he spoke to me and looked at me the way he does sometimes than anything in the world."

They watched the boat in silence, saw the two fishermen let down the net and began to draw it in, full of shining fish. Bar-joses sprang up.

"They are beckoning for their partners, my masters," he said. "I must go and see if I can help."

He ran along the beach, but in a moment Antipas saw another boat put out, and in an incredibly short time both boats were loaded to the water's edge. And as they drew near to shore Antipas saw one of the men

(it was Simon) fall upon his knees, and heard him exclaim :

“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord !”

Antipas was only a boy ; he had never thought much about sin, but suddenly it seemed to him that he could understand how that fisherman felt ; that sin was the one thing that he would not dare to bring into the presence of Jesus. But Jesus did not say anything to Simon about his sins ; he only looked at him with great kindness, and said in an encouraging tone, “Do not fear ; from this time forward you shall catch men.”

As Antipas walked homeward along the shore he met Bar-joses again. “Jesus has called them to leave everything and follow him for good and all,” he exclaimed eagerly, “all four of them, Simon and Andrew who were in the boat with him, and my master’s sons, James and John. Aren’t they happy men ! But I am happy, too, for old Zebedee will need me more than ever, and I shall have harder work to do.”

“Why are you glad of that ?” asked Antipas.

“Why, won’t that be working for the Master as much as if I were following him ?” asked Bar-joses.

“Yet I would rather be with him,” said Antipas.

“I would rather serve him than anything,” returned Bar-joses, “and he knows best what he wants of me. And perhaps now and then I may be with him, and even do some little thing to help him, though I can never be such a disciple as James or John will be.”

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW THE LORD TAUGHT THAT THE KINGDOM WAS ONE OF LOVE.

ANTIPAS was the happiest boy in all Capernaum, for when he brought home to his parents the account of what had taken place on the lake, they both said at once that they must see Jesus, to thank him for what he had done for them in healing their son. That very evening they all went together to look for him.

They found him in a little house down by the lake-side, and with him a woman of a sweet and dignified countenance who they knew at once must be his mother. Their hearts were so full of gratitude that, though both Chuza and Joanna were people who knew just what was right and proper to say on all occasions, they found it hard to put their thanks into words. But Jesus seemed to know what they wanted to say, and to answer the very thoughts of their hearts. The father and mother of Antipas went home with full conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah of their people.

The very next Sabbath they heard him preach. On the way to the synagogue Antipas noticed that every one was talking about his wonderful sermons, and they found the synagogue crowded, as it always was when a popular preacher was expected.

But Jesus did not preach like any one whom Antipas or even his father had ever heard. The preachers of that day always bolstered up their teachings by what this or that celebrated Rabbi had said; none of them ever thought of speaking as if he could himself explain the law of God, or judge of what was right or wrong. But Jesus spoke as if he had authority to pronounce upon such things. And some things he said, though they were so clear and simple that Antipas understood every word, surprised him very much, and he could see that other people were surprised, too. This was especially the case when Jesus said such words as these:

“Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time” (to the Israelites by Moses, he meant), “‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy’; but *I* say unto you, Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.”

Such teaching as this Antipas had never heard. He had supposed that it was right for people to hate their enemies and for Jews to hate and despise Gentiles; he had supposed that God loved only good people, and it seemed very strange when Jesus taught that the Heavenly Father loves and cares for every one, whether he is good or bad, and proved that God is infinitely loving by reminding them that He even feeds the birds of the air, that do not sow nor reap, nor gather into barns. “Are ye not of much more value than they?” he asked,

looking around upon them all with an expression so full of confidence, such perfect certainty that what he said was true, and at the same time so full of love to those to whom he spoke, that not one present but felt that it must be true. And they forgot about their enemies and thought only of the love of God when he went on to say to them, "Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you." Antipas thought of the four fishermen, James and John, Simon and Andrew, who had left all to follow Jesus and seek for the kingdom; he longed for the time when he too might leave all and follow him.

Suddenly there was a great confusion in the synagogue; a man sprang up, and with wild eyes, in an unearthly scream that sounded like no human voice, cried out, "Ah, what have we to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Are you come to destroy us?" Antipas clung to his father in terror, for he had been taught that those unhappy wretches whom he had sometimes met, raving and saying horrible things, had been taken possession of by demons, and brave boy though he was, he could not look without terror on one so awfully afflicted. This man fell into hideous contortions, and his voice rose to a frightful shriek as he exclaimed, "I know who you are, the Holy One of God!"

Every one was trembling and backing away from the

unfortunate creature. Even Chuza put his arm round his son and looked about for a place of safety, but the voice of Jesus was heard, very quiet but very commanding, "Hold your peace and come out of him."

The man fell upon the floor writhing in pain; then suddenly he arose, exhausted and trembling but uninjured in any respect, perfectly calm and well, no longer in the power of any evil spirit. Amazement took possession of the whole congregation; exclamations burst forth from many lips. "What is this?" "A new teaching!" "He not only interprets the Scriptures with authority, but also exercises authority over the evil spirits."

The excitement was intense; every one was exclaiming, wondering, forgetting all about the service for which they had come there; but as one by one they looked at Jesus they grew calm; for all of them saw what Antipas saw—such a look of kindly power, such a radiance of loving triumph, such perfect command of himself and of all that was happening, that they felt their own souls grow confident and strong in his strength and peace.

After the service was over the congregation gathered together in groups and talked about the cure of the man who had a demon, and went among their friends and talked about it, so that the whole city was ringing with the news of this wonderful deed, and very few people thought at all of the wonderful teaching they had received.

It was of this, however, that the parents of Antipas

were talking after they went home: of the Kingdom in which all people would love their enemies, and in which the Heavenly Father's love and power would provide for all wants; they were debating whether in that case it was not indeed the duty of everybody to seek before all things else the coming of that Kingdom. While they were conversing thus in the upper chamber on the roof, where they were sitting to enjoy the winter sun, they were joined by some friends who came to talk with them of the strange events of the morning.

These friends were Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, with his wife Rachel and their little daughter Tabitha. Tabitha was about the age of Antipas, and they had played together all their lives, neither of them having sisters or brothers. As Tabitha's father was the ruler of the synagogue, he was of course very much concerned with everything that took place there. He had become interested in Jesus, first through the healing of Antipas, and then through the reports of his preaching, and had invited him to preach that day; but he hardly knew what to think of the wonderful cure which he had there performed, and he wanted to talk it over with Chuza. Although Jairus was a Pharisee, and therefore very zealous for the law, and though the Pharisees had added a hundred minute regulations to the commandment to keep the Sabbath holy, neither he nor any Jew objected to friendly visiting upon the Sabbath day, provided the distance was not more than a "Sabbath day's journey" (about a mile). Indeed, they encouraged everything that tended to make men call the Sabbath a delight, so

long as it did not add to any one's work, because they held the Sabbath to be a festival and a day of special gladness.

While the parents talked together, Antipas led Tabitha to another part of the roof, for he wanted to tell her what he knew about Jesus without disturbing the conversation of the elder folk. But they had not been talking long when they heard a hubbub in the court below, and in a few minutes old Mirza came up to say that another wonder had happened; that immediately after the synagogue service Jesus had healed of a great fever the mother-in-law of his disciple, Simon the fisherman—healed her so perfectly that she had at once risen and waited upon them at their noon-day meal. The city was in a ferment of excitement, Mirza said, only waiting for sunset and the close of the Sabbath to bring all sick people to Jesus to be healed.

When Jairus and his family had gone home and the sun had set, and Chuza had solemnly “separated” the week-day from the holy time, Joanna yielded to Antipas's eager request and went out with him to see what Jesus was doing. They already knew the way to his house, but if they had not, they could easily have found it, for the streets were full of people going in one direction; mothers with sick babies in their arms, fathers carrying older children, sons and daughters helping invalid or suffering parents on the way, wives supporting the feeble steps of sick husbands or husbands of sick wives, and others, three or four together, bringing poor creatures who were possessed with demons to join the

group already gathered around the door of the humble little house by the lakeside. Jesus was standing before the door, a little boy was clinging to his robe, and behind him were grouped his disciples. Antipas and his mother stopped at a short distance, yet not so far away but that they could see the gentle touch and hear the gracious words with which Jesus healed all these poor sufferers. His eyes were glowing brightly, his face was radiant with a holy joy, and to Antipas it seemed as if his form grew more and more commanding as one after another the sick rose up and went away healed, with loud exclamations of thanksgiving.

They stood thus watching until the night had fallen and the moon had risen, and Chuza had come out to look for them. "See how he is fulfilling prophecy!" he said in a low voice to Antipas after he had gazed for a few moments on Jesus. "It is just what Isaiah said of the Messiah, 'Himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases.'"

"He looks weary, too," murmured Joanna, "as if the burden were a heavy one."

"Why not?" asked Chuza; "you, my Joanna, who are so full of sympathy, can easily understand that he must really suffer with the sufferings and sorrows of each one, to be able thus to remove them with a word."

"And what a word!" exclaimed Joanna clasping her hands. "Who ever heard such music of tenderness as rings in the tones of his voice!"

They would not speak to him, though they waited till the last sufferer had gone away; they knew he

needed rest and quiet. But they little thought how he got his rest—not by sleeping long and soundly, as any of them would have done, but by rising a great while before day and going out to a deserted place where no one would interrupt him, and there spending hours in prayer to God. For Jesus knew the true way to get rested and refreshed.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW THE LORD WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD.

ALL four of the Galilean fishermen had obeyed with joy the call of Jesus to leave all and follow him. They knew him well enough now to understand something of what it meant. They knew that since the new partnership they had formed, and the extending of their business by the arrangements John had made in Jerusalem, they had a fair prospect of amassing very comfortable fortunes if they continued in their business; but these thoughts did not make them hesitate. Some of their friends who, as well as they, believed that Jesus was the Messiah, tried to convince them that they could really serve him better by sticking to their business and getting rich, urging that Jesus would have need of large sums when once he was quite ready to set up his kingdom. The four fishermen had only one answer to all these arguments: "The Master knows what he wants of us and how we can serve him best."

Of course they looked forward to a glorious reward when Jesus should indeed set up his kingdom and they should share its honors and joys with him. But they knew that that must be in the far distant future; they had already learned enough to understand that his kingdom must be a kingdom of holiness, and they knew the

Jewish people were very far from holy. So there was, they knew, a long period of poverty and hard work between them and the glories of the kingdom. And they gladly obeyed the call of Jesus to share his poverty and toil.

But in the night after this Sabbath of miracles John especially was full of joy. His love for his Master had grown with every hour he had spent with him in the short tour they had made since Jesus called them, and now the wonderful works that he had done filled the enthusiastic youth with confidence that his Master would soon win all hearts as he had won his own. He did not stop to consider that it was not by any wondrous work that Jesus had won his own heart; that he had been drawn to him before Jesus had ever done anything wonderful; he forgot all that, and only felt exultation in the thought that one who was able to do such mighty works must soon command the loving obedience of all men. With proud delight he saw the people assembling around the door of Jesus' house in the early dawn of the next morning. He was hastening that way himself when he met Simon Peter, who looked anxious and worried.

"He isn't there!" Peter exclaimed. "He has gone off to some desert place to pray. We must find him at once; he is losing the opportunity of his life. Go you to the westward, John, and seek for him in the direction of the Valley of Doves. I will hasten to that deserted place north of the town where he sometimes goes; we must lose no time."

But when Peter and Andrew and James at last found Jesus he would not return to Capernaum. "Let us go

to some other towns that I may preach there," he said ; for he desired to proclaim the good news of the kingdom as widely as possible. And so, making a circuit around the city to meet John, they set out on a preaching tour through the villages which in that day were thickly clustered beside all the great highways and up and down the hills and valleys of Galilee.

The synagogues were always open on Monday and Thursday, which were market days, that the country folk might hear the Word of God, and twice during the week days Jesus had an opportunity to preach. And he taught every day, for wherever he went a little group would gather around him, attracted by the beauty of his countenance and the gracious charm of his manner. Sometimes he met one of those poor afflicted ones who were, or seemed to be, possessed by demons, for at that time there were no asylums for such afflicted people, and they therefore roamed the highways, a terror to every one. Whenever he met them he always healed them ; and so by degrees the report of these cures ran before him, and all the village people would come eagerly to meet him and would listen gladly to his teachings.

John, who with devoted love and intense expectation hung upon every word of his, soon began to notice that Jesus did not say much about being himself the Messiah ; he rather described what the kingdom of God was like, and what those people must be like who belonged to it ; teaching that men must be saved from sin before they could be members of the kingdom. Even the cures that he wrought seemed to be wrought not only for the sake of relieving pain, but also to show the

power of holiness over sin and the effects of sin ; for sin, John and all the disciples knew, was the cause of disease as well as of all other woes.

One day as they were approaching a village they saw a leper. This was not an uncommon sight, for this terrible disease was in the time of Jesus an awful scourge, as it still is, in the East. Devout Jews, like John and his companions, knew that leprosy was a type of sin, for it separated him who had it from all who had it not, and it was incurable, gradually eating into the whole body till it became a mass of corruption. Like sin, too, it was contagious, so that to be with one who was afflicted by it was not safe. The lepers were always driven out of their homes, and even out of their towns ; they lived together in wretched colonies, in tombs, or other unclean places, and it was the law that when they saw any one approaching they must warn him with the cry, "Unclean, unclean !"

But, to John's horror, this leper did nothing of the kind. He came toward them running, and threw himself upon his knees before Jesus, crying out, "Lord, if you will you can make me clean !" The disciples all started back in loathing and terror, for a touch would be pollution. But Jesus did not seem to fear pollution. A look of heavenly compassion came into his face. He bent forward and laid his hand upon the poor disfigured head and said in tones of divine sweetness : "I do will it ; be made clean !"

In an instant a marvelous change took place. The loathsome disfigurement passed away ; the man was healed, and he fell upon his face with sobs of joy and

thanksgiving. But Jesus calmed his excitement by reminding him that he had now his part to do—to show himself to the priests and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, as the law of Moses commanded. And so the healed leper went away, and the disciples hardly dared speak to Jesus for awe at what he had done. For they perceived that though he had laid his hand upon that leper he yet had not been polluted; they saw that there is a goodness so perfect that it can move among sinners and not be less good. And the ardent John gained a new glimpse into the holiness of self-sacrificing love, and learned that perfect love, which thinks nothing of self but only of those who need, cannot be defiled by loving any one, no matter how sinful and unclean.

These tours of teaching and healing were always short. On Fridays they went back to Capernaum for the Sabbath. Sometimes on that day Jesus would go to Chuza's house. And when he came, weary from a week's hard work, it was to Joanna the sweetest privilege to wait upon him, to see that her servants had all things ready for his refreshment, and then to sit beside him and hear him talk, or to sit silent beside him while he was silently resting. At such times it seemed to her, and to Antipas also, as if they could almost feel the joy that filled his heart; both mother and son began to realize that it was because he felt the presence of God that he had such joy and such strength to do good. What would it matter to be weary and hungry, to have even no place to lay your head at night, so long as God was with you? This was what Antipas began to learn from being sometimes with Jesus.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW EZRA WAS RESTORED TO HEALTH BY THE FORGIVENESS OF HIS SINS.

THERE were other people in Capernaum who looked forward to the Sabbath because then Jesus would be there—but none were happier when the Sabbath came than little Janna. He came always to Mary's every Friday afternoon that he might be there when Jesus arrived, before the Sabbath trumpets sounded and the Sabbath lamps were lit. Even if Jesus spent the Sabbath with Simon Peter or at the house of Zebedee or Chuza, he still always came home to his mother first for a little talk with her, and then he would take Janna in his arms and bless him, and that was enough to make the little boy happy all the week.

Janna's father was now perfectly helpless—a paralytic, unable to move hand or foot. Ruth used to think with tears that if it were any other disease she might help him go to Jesus and be cured; she would even have asked Jesus to come and cure him. Though she had known Jesus ever since she was a little girl playing with him in the market place of Nazareth, she hardly dared speak to any one of it, so much sought after as he was now. Chuza's was not the only fine house to which he was invited. Many of the rich Pharisees sent for

him to visit them, and he sometimes went, though he was much more often among the poor and suffering. But even if he should come to see her, Ruth did not believe that he could heal one entirely paralyzed as Ezra was, although he had done so many wonderful cures. Ruth had not yet heard of his healing the leper.

Ezra did not think Jesus could heal him either, but he longed to hear him preach. Before he fell ill he had been greatly troubled with the sins of Israel, feeling that the Messiah would not come until all the sinners had repented; but since he had lain there on his bed of helplessness, he had come to see that he was himself a sinful man. And when he saw this his agony of mind was very great. He heard that Jesus preached in the synagogues about the forgiveness of sins and about a Saviour from sin, and he ardently longed to hear him preach. But that seemed to be impossible.

“Why don’t you get some one to take you to Jesus, father?” little Janna would ask. “He would make you well.” But Ezra was so burdened with a sense of sin that he hardly cared any longer about getting well. If only his sins could be forgiven!

Janna could not give up the thought that Jesus could cure his father, and he told the other boys what he was thinking. So it happened that one day Bar-joses, going of an errand, stopped in at Janna’s house and told them that Jesus had unexpectedly come home, though it was not the eve of the Sabbath, and was at Zebedee’s house, talking to some of the rabbis about the forgiveness of sins. When Ezra heard this he groaned and said, “Oh,

if I could only hear him," and Bar-joses noticed that tears came into Ruth's eyes. Bar-joses was a quick-witted boy, and besides, he loved so much to hear Jesus talk that he was full of sympathy with one who from long illness had never been able to hear him.

"Ezra," he said, "I don't see why you shouldn't go. There are plenty of neighbors who would be willing enough to carry you to Zebedee's house on your bed. I'll go ask some of them." And he ran off without waiting for an answer, leaving Ezra all agitation with hope and fear.

It was some little time before Bar-joses came back, but when he came there were four men with him, neighbors of Ezra, who pitied him for being perfectly helpless while still in the very prime of life. Yes indeed, they said, they would be glad enough to take him to Jesus; and they felt sure that Jesus could heal him. After all, it could not be harder to cure paralysis than to cast out a demon. And so they lifted up the four corners of his bed and carried Ezra away, Ruth and Janna with Bar-joses following.

But all this had taken time, and meanwhile the rumor that Jesus was at Zebedee's house had flown like wildfire all over the city, and people had come together in crowds to hear him. When Ezra's party reached the street in which Zebedee lived they found it so thronged that they could hardly make their way through to the door, and there they had to stop. They could not possibly squeeze through the narrow passageway that led into the court.

Ezra's neighbors were honestly sorry; they had begun to take an interest in the helpless man, and did not like the thought of carrying him back unhealed. Yet what could they do?

Bar-joses suddenly made a suggestion. He knew his master's house, knew precisely on what part of the gallery Jesus must be standing, preaching to those who were assembled in the rooms as well as in the court below. Why not go up by the outer stair to the roof, and across it to that part of the gallery where Jesus stood? It would be a simple thing to take up some of the slight covering of the gallery and lower the sick man to Jesus' feet.

The look of gratitude that Ezra cast upon him was enough to repay Bar-joses for all his trouble, if he had needed payment; but where could he find greater pleasure than in helping people to come to Jesus? And so he joyfully led the way up the outer stair.

Antipas was in the gallery not very far from Jesus. For by this time the fame of Jesus' doings had reached Jerusalem, and some of the rabbis and doctors of the law had come to Capernaum to inquire about it. They had by no means forgotten his cleansing the Temple, nearly a year before, nor what it meant, and little as they desired a Messiah who, instead of raising the nation up to great power, merely went about doing good, they felt that it was very important for them to know just what he was teaching, and precisely what he proposed in the end to do.

So they had come to Capernaum, and as some of

them were well acquainted with Chuza, through his wife's uncle, Nicodemus, they were received into his house; and he had gone with them to hear Jesus teach. Antipas had been permitted to go too, and as these Jerusalem visitors were honored guests, they had all been given seats upon the gallery very near to where Jesus stood.

What was their surprise, in the midst of his teachings, to hear sounds as if somebody was at work upon the roof, and then to see the light streaming down through an opening! It was only for a moment, and then the opening was filled by a pallet which was slowly and carefully let down to the very feet of Jesus.

There lay a poor paralytic, utterly unable to move, his eyes fixed upon Jesus' face with an expression of such burning eagerness as touched every heart. Antipas, who knew so well the sensation of sudden healing, looked confidently to Jesus for the word of command, and it was with surprise that he heard, not "Arise and walk," as he had expected, but "Be consoled, son, your sins are forgiven you." "How disappointed the poor man must be!" Antipas thought; but looking at him he saw a look of such perfect joy upon his face, such an expression of rapture in the eyes that were fixed upon Jesus, that the boy came, in that moment, suddenly to see that to have one's sins forgiven was more than to be healed of even the most hopeless disease.

But around Antipas, between him and Jesus, there had been a movement of horror, the scribes and rabbis exchanging glances which seemed to say, "Blasphemy!"

and whispering among themselves, "Who can forgive sins but God?" And at this Jesus turned and looked at them with a surprise so sorrowful that it seemed as if it must have moved them to self-reproach.

"Why do you think evil in your hearts?" he asked. "Which is easier, to say, 'Thy sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?"

No one made any reply; to say one was indeed as easy as to say the other; and who would dare say either who had not the power to do the thing? Jesus waited a moment for his answer, and then, as none came, he went on, "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sin," he paused, and turning to the sick man he said, in a voice that sent a thrill through every one that heard, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

As if suddenly recalled from some ecstatic dream, Ezra started up, his eyes fixed on those of Jesus. He rose to a sitting posture, then to his feet; then stooping, he gathered up his pallet and, rolling it up, turned without a word to go. Perfect obedience was, he felt, the best thanks for such a gift as this.

But the great multitude who were listening to Jesus' teachings were struck with amazement. "We never saw it like this before!" "We have seen strange things to-day!" they said to one another, as they moved back and made a way for Ezra to pass with his pallet on his shoulder. Standing where they were outside the door, Ruth and little Janna knew that something strange had occurred—men were crowding out through the narrow

passageway talking in excited tones. And then they saw Ezra, walking upright, with a look of great joy upon his face and his rolled-up pallet upon his shoulder.

“Jesus has cured him!” exclaimed Janna in delight. “I knew that Jesus would cure him;” but by the light upon Ezra’s face Ruth knew there was more than this, and when he came to her and said, “He has forgiven my sins, Ruth,” she drew her veil over her face to hide her tears of joy.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW ANTIPAS BECAME A SON OF THE COMMANDMENT.

THE Passover time had come round again, and Antipas had gone up with his parents to Jerusalem. It was a solemn time for them all, for Antipas having passed his thirteenth birthday, the boy was now formally received in the temple as Bar Mizvah, a Son of the Commandment, and entered upon the estate of legal manhood as a member of the Congregation of Israel.

Jesus did not go up to the Passover this year; why, Antipas did not know, nor did his parents, but their uncle Nicodemus, who appeared to be very much interested in all they could tell him of Jesus, was of the opinion that he kept away because the scribes and chief priests were not friendly to him. "There was a good deal of disturbance among us when those who went from here to Capernaum brought an account of the healing of that paralytic man," he said. "That Jesus took it upon himself to forgive sins seemed blasphemous to nearly all in the Sanhedrin."

"But he is the Messiah, Uncle Nicodemus," said Antipas; "he has the right to forgive sins."

Nicodemus did not answer, and presently Chuza asked if the rulers were disposed to admit that Jesus was the Messiah.

• "You know how it is, Chuza," answered the old man.

"Few of the chief priests are patriotic ; they are Sadducees and not very earnest in religion ; they are friendly with Rome because under its rule they are prosperous and influential. They do not want the Messiah to come in their day and disturb the present state of things."

"But the Scribes, uncle," said Joanna, "they are not like that."

"No, not the Scribes and Pharisees," answered Nicodemus. "We are longing for the Messiah, of course, but most of our party want one who will lead the people in shaking off the yoke of Rome, and restore the ancient prosperity of our nation as it was under Solomon ; and Jesus seems not to be thinking of anything of the kind."

"He is wise too in that," said Chuza. "To rise against Rome now would be madness."

"If you knew him, Uncle Nicodemus," said Joanna, "if you could see how he is drawing men to himself by his holiness and his good deeds, you would see that his kingdom is already wider than Solomon's—a kingdom of hearts, a kingdom of holiness."

Nicodemus hesitated a moment and then said, softly, "I do know him."

"You, uncle !" exclaimed Antipas with delight. "Oh, then you know that he is truly the Messiah." Nicodemus made no reply.

"Where did you meet him, uncle ?" asked Chuza with interest.

"I went to him by night," said Nicodemus, "last year after he cleansed the temple ; and he told me"—

the old rabbi hesitated, his face softened and his voice grew reverent—"he told me that God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believed might have eternal life."

They were all too much moved to speak, but finally Chuza said, laying his hand upon Antipas's head, "His only-begotten Son! We know that the Messiah must be endowed with the Spirit of God in full measure and so in a special sense a Son of God; but His only-begotten Son! I cannot understand it; but what a revelation of the love of God!"

Antipas saw Mark several times while they were in Jerusalem; he had not forgotten Jesus, and was never tired of hearing Antipas's stories of him. He was very eager to have Jesus rise up against Rome. Living as he did where the power of the Roman government was seen and felt all the time, he naturally thought more about this than Antipas, whose father belonged to Herod's court, and who was, therefore, used from his boyhood to thinking that things were all right as they were. In Galilee people did not think so much about Rome, the Tetrarch Herod being not a Roman, and, bad as he was, in fact more than half a Jew; but in Jerusalem, where the Roman Governor had a palace in which he lived a part of the year, especially at feast times, and where there was always a strong guard of Roman soldiers in the tower of Antonia keeping watch on all that went on in the temple, the mass of the people felt the Roman rule to be a bitter thing. And Mark's parents

and all his friends were of that devout class to which Zebedee's family and Ezra's belonged, to whom religion and patriotism were one, and who longed intensely for the Messiah to come and establish an earthly kingdom of righteousness. These things Mark and Antipas often talked about when they were together.

Besides this, there was for Antipas the delight of exploring Jerusalem under Mark's direction, especially of going to the places mentioned in the Scriptures, where interesting events in the history of Israel had taken place. This at least was Mark's way of looking at them; for Antipas there was a still deeper interest in thinking how it would be when Jesus came at length to Jerusalem, after every Israelitish heart had learned to own him for Lord. Then, he thought, Jesus would be King of the souls of all men, and Jerusalem would be the seat of an empire before which Rome's would fall to nothing, with not a blow struck in war. These were the thoughts that occupied the boy during his second Passover season.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW THE LORD JESUS BEGAN TO SET UP HIS KINGDOM.

BAR-JOSES had often noticed the publican, Matthew, whom he had first seen, sitting at the place of toll, the day he went to the Jordan. Sometimes when Jesus had been going out with James or John or Peter for an hour's rest upon the lake, and Bar-joses had been permitted to go to help with the ropes or the oars, the boy had observed that Jesus had stopped and said a word or two to the despised tax-gatherer. And so when, one evening as they were coming home, Jesus said to Matthew, "Follow me," Bar-joses, loving Jesus as he did, was not surprised that Matthew at once rose up and, carrying all his money and books to the customs office near by, gave up his position and followed Jesus.

It was not long after this that the boy, roaming the streets after nightfall as boys love to do, saw Jesus pass along by the road that led to the mountain back of the town. The boy knew well why the Master was going there; it was where Jesus often went to be alone with God; and that night, as Bar-joses lay on the ground under the gallery of Zebedee's house, rolled up in the striped abbas that was both bed and covering to boys like him, he woke more often than usual and, looking up to the great lustrous stars, thought how they were shining on Jesus alone on the mountain in prayer to God.

When he went to his work in the morning he heard that the four fishermen and Matthew had followed Jesus to the mountain.

He had been busy for some hours carrying fish to customers, but it was still early when he met Antipas coming home from a ride.

“The Master must be up on the mountain,” Antipas said. “As I came back from my ride I saw such a number of people going out that way and carrying their sick folk with them. I am going to ask my mother if I may go. Can’t you go too?”

The fisher boy’s morning duties were finished, and before long the two friends had set out, walking along the lake and then up the steep hillsides, covered with palms and pomegranates, and so up the slopes where the close growing flowers were so thick as to make a bright carpet, and the trees above their heads were melodious with the singing of birds. And there they found Jesus. He was coming down from the higher ground accompanied by a number of men—no less than twelve in all, as the boys counted them; James and John and Andrew and Simon Peter and Matthew, and also Philip, Andrew’s friend who had been with Jesus at the Jordan, and Nathanael from Cana, and Judas, a dark-browed man who had followed Jesus from Judea, and several others whom Antipas had never seen, but whom Bar-joses knew, for in his capacity of errand-boy he had come to know almost every one. Three of them, he told Antipas, were connections of Jesus, named James and Judas Lebbaeus and Simon, sons of Clopas, his

mother Mary's husband's brother, and the fourth was Thomas, whom he had sometimes seen with Matthew.

As Jesus and the twelve came down the hill, loud cries of greeting and entreaty went up from the waiting crowd. "King Messiah!" "Hail, Master!" "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" and soon the cries of entreaty changed into exclamations of thanksgiving as Jesus went from one to another and laid his hands on them, or spoke a healing word, and their pains and diseases left them.

While this was taking place the boys drew nearer to the twelve, who stood a little apart, all wearing an expression of such deep solemnity that neither Antipas nor Bar-joses felt as if he might speak to any of them. But presently John saw them and came to where they were. He too looked deeply solemn, but there was an exultation, a lofty enthusiasm in his face which could not but impress even a boy so young as Antipas.

"He has taken the first step," said John in an intense tone, as if he were deeply moved. "He has laid the cornerstone of the kingdom. And it does seem to be time. See how widely his fame has gone abroad. Why, in this multitude about him at this moment there are people not only from Capernaum and all Galilee, but from Judea and Jerusalem and from Idumæa and even from about Tyre and Sidon."

"What do you mean by 'laid the cornerstone of his kingdom'?" asked Bar-joses.

John's face grew yet more solemn as he said, "He has chosen twelve of us who have been learning from

him, and he has appointed us to be Apostles, and we are to be always with him, except as he sends us forth in due time in different directions to preach, with authority to cast out demons."

John's eyes sparkled, his cheeks glowed, his whole frame seemed to thrill with awed excitement. The boys were excited too, although it was impossible for them to enter into the feelings of the ardent youth upon whom the consecrating hand of his Lord had just been laid.

But now the sick were all healed. The ejaculations of praise and wonder were silenced. Jesus moved back and took his seat upon a little eminence and called the twelve to come and sit around him. Then the vast multitude drew near and sat down upon the grass to hear him, Antipas and Bar-joses with many other children in front.

And then Jesus gave to his twelve disciples first, but also to those who listened, and indeed to the whole world for that time and for all time until he shall come again, THE LAW OF THE KINGDOM.

His first word thrilled through every heart: "*Blessed!*" Looking around upon them with a majesty that showed him a true law-giver, and yet with a love that made every one who heard him feel that he was listening to a friend, "Blessed," he said, "are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness,

for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." This was how he described the citizens of his kingdom.

Then he reminded them that their attempts to persuade others to be citizens too would often bring them into trouble: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." They would meet with opposition sharp and bitter, with persecution even, but in persecution they should still rejoice, seeing it was for their Master's sake; and he would give them their reward.

While these words were floating on the air in tones of such sweetness and love that to many it seemed as if an angel were speaking, suddenly there rose up before the mind of John a picture of another mount, one that had burned with fire and smoke and that was terrible with lightnings, and from which an awful voice had been heard saying, "*Thou shalt not!*" Ah, how different was the law of the kingdom from the law of Sinai! How different this gracious Master from the Messiah John had once expected, smiting his enemies with the sword of his mouth!

But the old law was not to be done away, Jesus said, for it was the law of God. "Think not that I came to

destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law till all be fulfilled."

Fulfilled! all the old law at last understood, and so all its commandments perfectly obeyed! The spirit of love, love to God and love to man, which would be in every member of the kingdom, would make it possible for them to keep the law, for after all the old law was love. This was what Jesus went on to teach, showing what was the real spirit of one and then another of the ancient laws. They could all be obeyed through love; love animating all their life, their alms, their prayers, their good deeds. Nothing done for praise of men, but all for pure love. And as John listened his heart swelled with longing that his life might become one pure flame of love, ever burning like the fire on the altar, to the service and glory of God. But how?

Jesus told them. Through secret prayer and communion with God. "Enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee." "Pray not with vain repetitions like the heathen," nor even with too minute petitions for your own wants, "for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." But pray large petitions in which everybody can have a part: "Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done: Give us this day our daily bread: Forgive us our debts: Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil."

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW ANTIPAS IS PERMITTED TO MINISTER TO THE LORD JESUS.

THE two boys who sat in the front row of the great multitude, with their eyes fastened upon Jesus, listened eagerly as he went on to say that the citizens of the kingdom were not to lay up treasures on earth; better riches than those of earth are theirs, and earthly treasures cannot help on the coming of the kingdom.

At this teaching Antipas was puzzled, for he knew that his mother was glad that she was rich, because with her money she could help Jesus when he came to set up the kingdom. But Jesus said that the way they could help the kingdom was just by shining as a lamp does; only with the light that comes from God. This was to be the thing they were to really care about, and as to their food and drink and clothes they were not to be anxious about them. "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things," Jesus said; He will take care of that. "Seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

But they were not to think that because they belonged to the kingdom they might sit in judgment on other people. They were to consider their own sins, not the faults of their neighbors, and do to every one as he would have others do to him, striving to bring forth in his conduct the good fruit of the kingdom. "Not

every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," said the Master.

And the long, beautiful sermon closed with a solemn warning which the youngest child sitting in that front row looking up to Jesus' face could understand: "Every one, therefore, which heareth these words of mine and doeth them shall be likened unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the wind blew and beat upon that house and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house and it fell; and great was the fall thereof."

As the great multitude broke up, and went their way, many of them waiting for Jesus and the twelve to pass down the hill, and then following after, Antipas was surprised to see his mother's litter. He left Bar-joses and hastened to her.

"You here, mother!" he exclaimed.

"Let us not talk, my son," she said tenderly, yet with a look of awe in her dark eyes. "Let us think quietly as we go home, trying to fasten the Master's words upon our hearts. Afterward we will speak with one another about them."

The boy obeyed, walking beside his mother with his hand on her litter. He could not, like her, go carefully

in his mind over all that Jesus had said, but the sound of the Master's voice, the look in his eyes as of a love so large that it could take in all the world, with a great joy in loving, went with him all the way. And he understood, too, that to be a citizen of the kingdom of God meant, first of all, to love God and seek to do His will, and then to love all men, and try to do them good for His sake.

That evening when father, mother, and son were in the projecting window looking together over the waters of the lake, where the glorious stars of the eastern sky were reflected in its still depths, Joanna told her husband all that had happened that morning, and said that she wanted to give her time and her wealth to the service of Jesus. "We have great possessions, dear husband," she said, "and he has given back to us that which is more to us than all our wealth, our only son. Now he is about to set forth upon a long preaching tour with his disciples. Let me go with him and minister to him of our substance. What is it all worth, if by it we can do nothing to advance the kingdom?" She spoke with deep emotion, and Antipas slipped his little hand in hers to show her that he felt with her.

Chuza meditated long on what his wife said, and then asked, "Is there need of such a ministry?"

"I have been to see his mother this afternoon," she said; "and there I met her sister Salome, the wife of Zebedee the fisherman, whose two sons have been chosen by Jesus as his apostles. She says that in consequence of the disobedience of the leper whom Jesus healed, who

has gone everywhere noising his cure abroad, the multitudes of merely curious persons who crowd round him in the cities are so many that he can no longer teach in them to advantage but must remain in desert places to teach those who come out to him. Therefore it seems necessary that his friends should minister to him. There is a woman of Magdala, Mary by name, whose whole life is bound to Jesus, because he healed her of one of the worst forms of that terrible malady, demoniac possession ; she desires to use her little property in the service of the Master. And Susanna, our widowed friend, is also of a mind to do the same, and Salome as well."

"What is your thought, then?" asked Chuza.

"My thought is that if you will let me have a gentle mule and one of the servants to lead another laden with food and such necessaries as we could carry, we might be of real service to the Master."

"It is a good thought, my Joanna," said Chuza, "and I who owe to him my only son will surely not withhold from him anything of mine he needs, not even though it take you from me for a time. Go, and may our God be with you!"

Antipas had not spoken all this time, for no Jewish boy of his day would have interrupted the conversation of his parents. But now he withdrew his hand from his mother's and, going to his father, said :

"My father, will you not let me go with my mother?"

His father hesitated. "Your studies, my boy ; is it well for you to interrupt them?"

"Father, I can learn more from Jesus than from all



THE VILLAGE CALLED NAIN.

the books. I want to learn how to help in the kingdom ; I will study books all the harder when I come back."

Joanna laid her hand on her husband's arm in entreaty, and he answered in deep emotion :

"My son, I give you to the Lord, even as Samuel was given ; may you serve your God and your country as well as he did !"

So all the next weeks Antipas was with Jesus, going up and down the land, hearing his words, seeing his works, and waiting upon him as his mother directed. And as the Master loved children, he often spoke lovingly to Antipas, and this child, who was so often near to Jesus, was more full of joy, more full of gladness in his service, more full of longing that all people should know Jesus and come into his kingdom, than it is possible to describe.

One day Antipas saw Jesus heal a boy who was deaf and dumb ; one day he saw him open the eyes of the blind ; one day, most wonderful of all, he saw him raise a boy from the dead.

They were approaching a village called Nain—The Beautiful—nestling on the hill slope of Little Hermon. Jesus was followed not only by his disciples and dear ministering friends but by a long train of followers, and thus they met another procession coming out of the city. Even Antipas knew what the procession was—the mourning women with their wild, dirge-like chants, the men with flutes and trumpets, the open wicker casket carried by four men, the one woman walking before it

in rent garments, bowed down with grief, the great multitude following after. Some one was dead—the only son of his mother, and she a widow, walking before him to his last resting-place. “Ah,” thought Antipas, “at last here is a sorrow which even Jesus cannot cure,” and the boy, who had been walking, as he often did, close beside his Master, looked up into his face with sympathy, thinking how his loving heart would be torn with sorrow at a grief he could not heal.

But in Jesus’ face there was that same look of triumphant love which he had often seen before, only more tender, more glorious than he had ever seen it. And now, stepping forward to the side of the weeping mother, “Be not weeping!” he said, with his thrilling voice of sympathy, and then moved on and touched the wicker casket. To touch it was to become unclean according to Jewish law, and the bearers stood still in horror; but they forgot all that when his voice, sweet, strong, commanding, said:

“Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!” and the boy sat up and, looking into the face of him who spoke, said, “Master!”

Again Joanna thought of the prophets who had brought to life the only sons of weeping mothers. And remembering the prayers and efforts with which they had recalled the vanished life, and contrasting it with the majesty of Jesus’ commanding word, she said to Antipas, as awed, exulting, he ran to her side, “Is not this the very Lord of Life? Is he not the very Son of God?”

One day they came to the place that Antipas had most of all wanted to see, Nazareth, Jesus' own country, where he was brought up. As they drew near Antipas looked around upon the wreath of overlapping hills encircling the pleasant little village, and thought how many times, when Jesus was a boy like him, he had looked upon the same scene. And when they entered the village he saw the little house where Jesus used to live, and the vine growing over the wall and overshadowing the upper chamber where he used to sit, and the carpenter bench still standing before the door. Some one else was the village carpenter now, but nothing else was changed.

The day was the Sabbath. They had passed the night upon the hillside very near the entrance of the village, for only a short journey might be taken on the Sabbath day. It was very early in the morning, and the townsfolk were all hastening to the synagogue, for Jesus was going to preach in his own city. As Jesus and his followers were making their way to the place of worship they passed a poor half-witted boy who was lying in the street, taking no notice of the company that passed by. Antipas wondered that the Master did not heal the poor lad, whom they had to walk around to avoid trampling on him, but though Jesus gave him a look of love, such as he always gave to the suffering and the helpless and to little children, he did not speak to him, nor say to the demon that had possession of him, "Come forth!" "Jesus always knows what is right," thought Antipas, and yet he could not help wishing he would cast out the demon.

None of those who were with Jesus knew how he had been treated in Nazareth when he preached there before. Perhaps the people of Nazareth were ashamed when they remembered it; perhaps, seeing him followed by a number of disciples, like a great rabbi, they wanted to hear him preach again. But at best they came out of curiosity. Antipas, sitting back on one of the humbler seats, soon saw that they were whispering among themselves, and when the sermon was over, and according to custom any one might ask the preacher questions, instead of asking the meaning of what he had said they began to say to one another, "Where did he learn all that?" "How did he get his wisdom?" And a coarse, rough man cried out sneeringly, "He is nothing but the carpenter who used to live here," and others exclaimed, "Why, he is Mary's son and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon!" "Why, his sisters are living here now; we know all about him!" And again the rough man cried, "They talk about his mighty works! Let him heal my poor Nathan if he can!"

When Jesus came out of the synagogue nobody followed him except those who had come with him, and John, walking with Joanna and Antipas, saw that a prophet has no honor in his own country and among his own kin. And so Nazareth, with its sneers and its unbelief, saw none of Jesus' mighty works, although he did go into a few homes of friends, who really loved him for the sake of old times—perhaps his sisters—and lay his hands upon the sick people there and make them well.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW ANTIPAS LEARNED MORE ABOUT THE KINGDOM AND ITS KING.

It was during this journey that Antipas learned something more about the forgiveness of sins. A Pharisee, who was curious to meet one who was making so great a stir, invited Jesus to his house ; but being, like many Pharisees, so wrapped up in self-satisfaction that there was no room in his heart for love or even for courtesy toward one whom he thought poorer than himself, he neglected even the common decencies, gave no orders for the pouring of water on the traveller's dusty feet, still less for the anointing with perfumed oil which was given to an honored guest. But the Pharisee was very willing that every one should see his hospitality to this wandering prophet, and therefore Antipas and several other boys of Jesus' company came into the court and stood where they could see into the banqueting hall, as it was the custom to do. And presently there crept in a poor, worn, wicked woman, the very offscouring of the street, carrying a costly alabaster jar ; and creeping to Jesus' feet as he reclined on the luxurious divan according to the custom of such feasts, she began to weep over his feet, her tears falling so abundantly as to wash away the travel stains ; then she wiped them with her

long hair and poured fragrant ointment upon them from her alabaster box, kissing them in deep humility.

There was a sneer upon the Pharisee's face as he saw this, as much as to say, "If this man were a prophet he would know that this woman is a sinner and would spurn her from his feet." Then Jesus spoke in his gentle, courteous voice, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Master, say on," replied the Pharisee; and Jesus told him the story of a man who had two debtors, one who owed a large sum and one a small, and as both were equally unable to pay he forgave both. "Which of them will love him most?" asked Jesus, and Simon answered carelessly, "I suppose him to whom he forgave most."

"You have well said," said Jesus, and then he raised himself up and turned toward the woman with an air of such dignified command that the proud Pharisee blushed with shame as he added, "Simon, do you see this woman? I came to your house, and you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears. You gave me no kiss of welcome, but she has not ceased to kiss my feet; you did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with costly ointment. So I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven he loves little;" and then, in a voice of thrilling kindness, he said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven," and she lifted up her face with joy and gratitude and went out of the house. Thus it was that Antipas learned that there was no limit to his Master's power to forgive.

They were at home again in Capernaum, and Antipas was busy with his books with an ardor he had never known before. It was not merely because he was a little older and therefore wiser; it was because everything in life seemed to have new value, new importance, since he had found that it might all be used for the service of Jesus.

Of course his studies did not keep him from seeing Jesus every day. Just as in the old time, Jesus was always the centre of a group of children, and Antipas, as soon as his lessons were over, always joined them. So he heard many beautiful teachings of Jesus, some of them spoken to the children alone, some of them to the older people, who gathered around him more and more as the days went on.

One day when Antipas went to look for his Master he found him in Peter's house, and a number of men and women sitting around. As usual, the boy made his way to a place near Jesus, where the little children were clustered around him, happy to be near him even when they could not understand all that he was saying.

To-day they could understand very little. A number of Scribes and Pharisees were there and were arguing with him. The children wondered that they should want to talk when they might have heard Jesus talk, for surely no one ever spoke as Jesus did. And presently Antipas heard something that filled him with horror. The Scribes and Pharisees were accusing Jesus of having the help of Satan in healing the poor demoniacs whom he had restored from their frightful ravings

to be in their right mind. Antipas hardly knew whether to be exultant or terrified at the way in which Jesus answered them, so severe, so stern, so full of indignation that the rabbis fairly cowed before him. And yet, as Antipas could see, Jesus did not in the least lose his self-control, and even in the midst of his severest sayings he brought in little stories, as was his way, to explain to his hearers more perfectly what he meant.

Yet there was something terrible even in these stories; they were not about the sower, or the shepherd, or the merchantman, such as Antipas had often heard him tell, but about a strong man armed, or about wicked men taken possession of by evil spirits, and the awfulness of uttering words against the Holy Spirit of God. With every word his eyes grew more dreadful; his voice sounded like the deep notes of a warning bell.

A woman standing in the outer edge of the circle presently exclaimed that his mother must be blessed to have him for a son. He turned his eyes upon her and answered, "Say, rather, they are blessed who hear the word of God and keep it;" and as he said these words Antipas was filled with wonder, for it seemed to him that all those who loved Jesus heard this saying as a gentle blessing, while the very same words were a stern reproof to those who sat before him only to find fault.

Jesus was still speaking to them in warning and reproof when there was a little stir at the door; the mother and brothers of Jesus stood there looking somewhat troubled. Mary spoke softly to some one who stood near, and that person came to Jesus saying,

“Your mother and brothers are asking for you.” The stern look with which he had been speaking melted into the expression of tenderness that it always took on when he looked at his mother; his eyes turned toward the door, and then were directed toward his disciples and the little children who sat near him; he seemed entirely to overlook the carping, critical rabbis, as if they were of no consequence, and in that voice of thrilling sweetness that always went to the heart of those who loved him, he said, “Do you know who my mother and my brothers are? Here they are, my mother and my brothers”—and it seemed to his disciples and the children as if his eyes rested upon each one of them in love—“for whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is as dear to me as brother or sister or mother.”

And then he rose from his seat and, going through the group of unloving Scribes and Pharisees, he went away with his mother.

Very often in those days Jesus sat in a boat to teach, for in that way he could better see the crowd that followed him, and they could better see and hear him. Of late Jesus had begun to teach in a new way—almost entirely by parables, or stories that have a meaning. John had told Antipas and Bar-joses that one reason for this was that Jesus wanted thus to separate those who followed him out of mere curiosity from those who truly wanted to learn. For the parables, though they were interesting, were not always easy to understand, and only those who cared for something other than to be amused took the trouble to ask for their explanation.

One day when he was sitting in the boat, and the children sitting near him on the sand, with a great multitude covering all the shore, Jesus told them a number of parables about the kingdom, to show what its nature was and what must be the character of the people who belong to it.

It was like a sower sowing seed, he said, and the seed falling into all sorts of ground and sometimes being lost and sometimes bearing little fruit and sometimes bearing much; it was like good seed sown in a field and an enemy coming and scattering the seeds of weeds among the corn; it was like a tiny grain of mustard-seed from which grew a great tree; it was like a bit of leaven in a pan of dough that fermented and fermented till it leavened the whole lump; it was like treasure hid in a field; like a goodly pearl; like a net cast into the sea and bringing up many fish, some bad, some good. All these stories he told to show what the kingdom really is.

The grown people seemed not to understand; even the disciples were puzzled; but the children listened with delight, and perhaps they understood better than the grown people, for they had not their minds made up as to what the kingdom ought to be, and to them it seemed plain that in the kingdom there would be some people more full of good deeds than others, and that the power of the kingdom must ever grow and grow until it filled the whole world.

At last evening came and all the people went home. Antipas lingered a little and heard Jesus ask his disciples to hoist the sail and carry him over to the other

side of the lake. He saw Jesus lie down in the stern of the boat with his head on the steerman's cushion, as if he was very weary; and then Antipas ran away home.

An hour later as he sat on the roof with his father and mother he saw a ship afar off in the midst of the lake that he recognized for that of Jesus, and he pointed it out to them. It was sailing beautifully along in the white moonlight, but not rapidly, for there was hardly any wind, and the sea was perfectly smooth. But even while they were looking at it the wind suddenly came up and began to blow almost a hurricane; one of those sudden squalls that often come upon the Lake of Galilee, sunk so deep among the hills. Chuza uttered an exclamation of alarm, for even at that distance they could see that the little ship was plunging frightfully and that the waves seemed to wash entirely over her; and then, far more suddenly than it had come up, the wind died down, the clouds rolled away from before the moon, and they could see the gallant little boat riding the smooth sea and drawing rapidly near the farther shore.

That was all, so far as Antipas knew. He wondered a little that the storm had ceased so quickly, but he had no idea of what really had taken place.

John had been sitting at the tiller near his beloved Master, as he lay asleep with his head upon the hard steerman's cushion. The young disciple's mind was so busy with the parables that Jesus had spoken that day that he had not noticed how light the wind was or how slowly they were moving over the glassy surface of the lake. Suddenly a sharp blast struck his cheek, the boat

careened, there were shouts from his comrades in the other end of the vessel as they sprang up to let out the ropes and ease the struggling sail, for the little boat was battling with a hurricane.

Four of the men on board were experienced sailors and knew every trick of that lake, but even they were appalled at the fury of the gale. The other eight were landsmen, and in their confused terror they were not only useless but in the way, while their fright helped to unman their comrades. Through all the wild confusion, the shrieking of the wind, the straining of the timbers, the booming of the waves, Jesus still slept; the moon was hidden behind the dark storm-cloud, but John, bending all his strength upon the tiller, could not but feel the utter calmness of that sleep. Instead of strengthening it discouraged him. Ah, yes, Jesus might as well sleep, for here was something which even he could not help; the winds and the waters were in the power of God. And then as the vessel rose staggering and trembling on a mighty wave, and in a moment crashed down into the yawning depth while the waters swept over the little bark, there was a rush of the other disciples, frantic with terror and despair, and a wild scream, "Master, Master, do you not care that we perish?"

In the black darkness John could not see that Jesus opened his eyes, but he heard his voice above the booming of the storm, "Why are you afraid?" Have you not yet faith?" And then Jesus rose, and said in a voice of command, "Peace! Be still!"

And suddenly the wind fell, the clouds broke away, the moon shone out upon a subsiding sea, and the twelve disciples, looking upon him with awe, hardly dared speak to him, but whispered to one another, "What manner of man is this?" "Even the winds and the waters obey him!"

But John's soul rose in exultation that the king he had chosen to follow, the king of his heart as well as his life, was able to be ruler, not only over men, but also over the powers of earth and sky.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW THE LORD BROUGHT LITTLE TABITHA TO LIFE.

FOR several days Jesus was gone with his twelve disciples to the other side of the lake. Antipas was longing earnestly for him to come back, for Tabitha, his little playmate, was very ill. If Jesus were only there, Antipas felt sure that he would make her well; if even he only knew that little Tabitha was ill, over there on the other side of the lake, he would cure her; he had healed Antipas himself when far away. But he was gone, and he did not know that Tabitha was so very ill that her mother would not let even her little playmate Antipas see her.

But at last from the roof of the house he saw a vessel coming across the lake that he knew for that of Jesus, and he ran to the place where it usually came to land. He found little Janna there and several other children whom Jesus loved, and in a few minutes many people began to come, for they too had seen the boat, and in these days a crowd always gathered around Jesus wherever he went. The boat drew to the shore, and just as Jesus stepped upon land there was a stir and hurry, and Jairus, little Tabitha's father, came pushing his way through the crowd. The dignified ruler of the synagogue hardly looked like himself, for his clothes were

carelessly put on and his beard was neglected ; but every one made way for the afflicted father who, falling on his knees before Jesus, cried, " My little daughter ! my little child ! she is dying ! Come, oh come, I pray, and lay your hands upon her that she may get well ! "

With a look of deep sympathy Jesus raised up the agonized father and turned in the direction of his house. Antipas followed close, and so did all the people ; the narrow street was full and they almost trod upon one another. Antipas could think of only one thing—Tabitha was dying ! Oh, if they could but go faster ! If only the crowd would not get in the way and detain Jesus ! Then he remembered the boy at Nain, and with joy he thought, " Jesus cannot come *too late* ! It will never be too late where Jesus is. "

Yet even Antipas was impatient when he saw a woman push through the crowd and furtively touch the tassel that hung from the corner of Jesus' robe where it was flung over his shoulder, and then shrink back among the multitude, while Jesus stopped and turned, saying, " Who touched me ? " No one answered at first, but when he asked again Peter said, " Master, you see how great the crowd is, who can tell who touched you ? "

But Jesus repeated, " Some one touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me ! " Then the woman came trembling, and fell at his feet, and said that she had been ill for many years and could not get cured, and she had felt sure that if she might but touch his garment she should get well, and it had proved so, for she was perfectly well. And Antipas saw that Jesus looked

upon her with pleasure, and said, " Daughter, your faith made you well, go in peace." And she turned and went away with a look of great joy upon her face.

But the poor father had stood by with a look of agony, for he knew that his little daughter was dying. Antipas longed to speak to him and tell him how Jesus had raised to life the dead boy at Nain, but he did not dare, and now Jesus turned back to Jairus and they all went on together.

But before they reached the house they knew that little Tabitha was dead; for the sound of the flute and the voices of the wailing women, hired to bewail the dead, came over the heavy footfall of the multitude, and a servant came running to Jairus, saying, " Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Master any further?"

Jesus paid no attention to the man's words. He only turned to the suffering father and said, " Do not fear, only believe!" in a tone so strong and full of power that Jairus could not help believing, and all his fear and sorrow went away.

At the door Jesus stopped and said that no one might go in except Peter and John and James. So Antipas remained outside, hearing the moans and shrieks of the hired mourners. But presently these all came trooping out, indignant and scornful, saying that Jesus had turned them out and had said the child was not dead, but only sleeping, when they knew that she was dead.

It was not till the next day that Antipas knew just what had happened in the house. He knew very soon that little Tabitha was alive and well, although her

parents thought it best not to let her see any of her little friends for a while; but the next day he saw John and heard all about it, for John and Antipas had come to be good friends while they were travelling through Galilee together, and the boy was helping his mother minister to the comfort of Jesus.

“We went into the house,” John said, “and the mourners were making their doleful noises, and the Master bade them cease, for the little girl was not dead but sleeping. They laughed and jeered, and so he made them leave the house; and you know, Antipas, that no one disobeys when the Master speaks in a voice of command.”

“I know,” said Antipas softly.

“And then when all was quiet in the house we went into the room, just Jairus and his wife Rachel, and Peter, James, and I, with the Master. He stood beside the bed for a moment looking at her with that look of love he gives to children—like little Janna, for instance.”

“And me,” said Antipas, remembering the many times that he had seen the Master look upon him with love.

“And you,” said John. “And then he took her hand and said to her softly, ‘Little maid, arise!’ And the color came into her white cheeks, and she sat up and looked at him, and then she jumped from the couch and ran to her mother. And the Master smiled; but he only said to her father, ‘Give her something to eat,’ and we came away. I think that was because it was not

good for the little maid that there should be much excitement about her cure."

After this Antipas did not see Jesus for a long time. For now, having been for many months carefully instructing his disciples, and having himself gone all over Galilee preaching and doing works of love and power, he sent out the twelve disciples two and two to preach and teach, and he himself went away to Jerusalem to one of the feasts. And after a time Antipas's father also went away, for Herod the Tetrarch made a journey to his castle of Machærus, far away in the South beyond the Dead Sea, and desired Chuza to go with him. He intended to pass his birthday there, and to celebrate it by a brilliant banquet, to which all the lords and military officers and principal citizens of Galilee were invited.

So for a time the children saw nothing of Jesus, but they did not forget him. They used often to get together and talk about him—Antipas and Tabitha and Bar-joses and little Janna—meeting sometimes on the shore of the lake, but more often in the house of Mary, the mother of Jesus. And she would tell them, as she so often had told little Janna, stories of Jesus when he was a little boy; and hearing how good and obedient and unselfish he had been, they learned how to be better children than they ever had been before.

When at last Chuza came home he seemed to be very sad, and presently he told his wife and son what it was that made him so. The prophet, John the Baptist, he who had preached so mightily in preparing the way for

Jesus, had been beheaded by Herod's command. For months he had been kept a prisoner in the dungeons in the castle of Machærus, but Herod had not dared to kill him, because he knew how much the people revered and believed in him, and he was afraid there would be a rebellion if any harm came to the prophet. But at his birthday feast, Salome, the daughter of the wicked Herodias who had left her husband to live with his brother Herod, had danced before the festive company, and had so delighted Herod that he had promised to give her anything she asked for.

"Salome went and consulted her mother," said Chuza, "and she bade her ask for the head of John the Baptist."

"Herodias always hated the prophet," remarked Joanna, "because he told Herod he had no right to take her from his brother; but would Herod grant such a request?"

"He was sorry enough," replied Chuza, "but he was ashamed not to keep a promise which he had made before all his courtiers, and so he sent and had the prophet's head cut off, and it was brought into the banqueting-hall on a salver and given to Salome."

"How horrible!" exclaimed Joanna, and then she added with an expression of tenderness, "the Master will be grieved."

"Yes, and I fear it will make him trouble," answered Chuza. "The multitude have always been devoted to the Baptist, and now that he is gone they will be likely to insist that Jesus shall openly proclaim his kingdom and help them to throw off Herod's rule."

“And you do not think the time for that has come?” asked Joanna.

“The Master will set his own time,” replied Chuza; “he will not let the people force him to do it. And then if they should turn against him!”

“Turn against Jesus, father?” exclaimed Antipas in surprise. “Why, no one who has ever loved him would do that!”

Chuza did not answer his son, but after a short silence he said:

“I think I see trouble before the Master in the future. The Sanhedrin, I hear, are much displeased because in Jerusalem he healed a man on the Sabbath, and because he justified himself for it by saying that God also does His works of benevolence on the Sabbath, and that God was his Father, making himself equal with God!”

“Why, father!” exclaimed Antipas again, “isn’t that like what he said to Uncle Nicodemus? Uncle Nicodemus stands up for him, doesn’t he?”

“He would be only one among many enemies if he did,” replied Chuza. “Well, we shall see. I fear how it will end.”

Antipas was much surprised. How could it end except in Jesus making them see sooner or later that he was truly the Messiah, and that his way of the kingdom was the right way?

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOW THE LORD TAUGHT THE CHILDREN THE LESSON OF THE LILIES.

A DAY or two after this Antipas and Tabitha, who had gone out into the fields to gather some of the gorgeous lilies that bloom just before the Passover time, saw Jesus coming. They ran to meet him, the lilies in their hands, and when he saw them he smiled upon them and seemed so glad to see them that it made their hearts very glad. And then he seated himself by the wayside and placed one of them on each side of him, and taking the flowers from Tabitha's hand he said, "Look at the lilies, children, they do not toil, they do not spin, and yet the great King Solomon in all his glory was never clothed so beautifully as one of these."

The children looked thoughtfully at the lilies; they had never stopped to think how they came to be so beautiful.

"If your Heavenly Father has given such beautiful clothes to the flowers that cannot know or love Him," Jesus went on, looking at the children with love, "will He not always give you whatever you need?"

These children had always had everything they needed, almost everything that they had ever thought of wanting; but now, when Jesus reminded them that

it was God who had given these things to them, everything they had seemed to become more precious, and their hearts were full of joy that the Heavenly Father cared for them. It was always so when they were with Jesus; each time they felt themselves growing a little better acquainted with God.

They walked along together after a while, and as they passed through a grove of flowering trees, where the birds were twittering in the branches, Jesus told them how the Heavenly Father takes care of them. "You know," he said, "that the little sparrows are so many and so small that two of them are sold for a farthing; and yet your Heavenly Father cares so much for them that He notices when even one of them is killed. So He cares for you; even the hairs of your head are numbered; you are of more value to Him than many sparrows," and the children were more than ever grateful to God, who loved the little birds, and loved children much more than even the birds.

When they came to Mary's house they found that the twelve Apostles had returned from their journeys of preaching and healing the sick and were waiting to see Jesus. Two other men were also waiting for Jesus; they were disciples of John the Baptist, the prophet who had been killed. They had been allowed to bury his body and then they had come to tell Jesus.

Antipas had never before seen Jesus look sad. He had often seen a great loving pity sweep over his face; he had seen his eyes grow large and dark with sympathy with people who were in pain or grief, but always it had

seemed to the boy as if there was a great fountain of joy in Jesus' heart, ever welling up and overflowing upon those who were sorrowful, and making them joyful too. And it always had been so ; but now he felt that his dear Master was grieved at heart. Yet he saw that though Jesus was sad he was not thinking of himself. He comforted the disciples of the Baptist with hopeful words ; he asked his own disciples to tell him all they had done and all they had taught, and he listened with deepest interest to what they had to tell of the comfort they had brought to the sorrowing, and the teaching they had given to those who wanted to learn about Jesus.

Before they had finished the people began to crowd around the doors, bringing their sick friends as they had always done. Weary as Jesus and his disciples were, they had no time to rest or even to eat ; and after healing the sick, Jesus said to his disciples, "Come, let us go away into a lonely place and rest a while ;" and so Antipas and Tabitha bade Jesus good-by and went to their homes, and Jesus and his disciples went down to the shore to take their boat and sail away to where they could find rest and quiet. Antipas knew he should not see Jesus again for a good while, for it was almost Pass-over time, and he was going to set out the next day with his parents for Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW BARJOSES MINISTERED TO THE LORD.

BAR-JOSES had just finished cleaning out the boat when Jesus and the disciples came down to the shore, for he knew that Jesus had come back, and he thought that he might want to go on the lake for a little while. His heart was full of happiness, because this time he was working expressly for his dear Master; and it seemed as if he could not contain his delight when Jesus, looking around the ship and seeing in what perfect order Bar-joses had put it, smiled upon him and said, "Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." To be commended by Jesus! Who could have a richer reward than that?

As the boat pushed off Bar-joses heard them saying that they were going to a lonely place near the city of Bethsaida Julias, about six miles away around the head of the lake; and he was glad they were going to so quiet a place, for he knew that they needed rest. But as he went about his work he began to fear that Jesus would not, after all, have much rest there, for the news that he had returned had by this time gone all over the city, and a great many people set out to follow him on foot around the head of the lake, and Bar-joses, looking to see how the wind was, thought it quite likely that they



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would get there even before Jesus, for it was blowing almost straight from the northeast, and the ship would have to beat its way across the lake.

All day long, as he was doing his various duties, he was thinking of this, and wishing that he could do something to help Jesus.

Suddenly a thought came to him that filled him with joy: he would carry the Master something to eat. He had a little store of provisions—five thin, flat loaves of barley meal and two little dried salt fishes for a relish. The place where Jesus had gone was only six miles away; he could walk it in two hours, and get there by the time Jesus had finished teaching and dismissed the people; and then, oh, what joy to minister to the needs of his dear Master! His work of carrying fish to customers was done; the afternoon was not more than half spent; he could reach the place in good time. And with a light heart the fisher boy set out, his barley loaves and little fish safely stored in his scrip.

When he came to the place where the road to Bethsaida turns off from the great caravan road, he learned that a caravan of Passover pilgrims coming from northern Galilee had turned out of their way to hear Jesus preach, leaving all their provisions and other baggage under the charge of a few camel-drivers and others who had not cared to go. And as he drew near to the wide, grassy plain where he knew Jesus was likely to be, he saw such a multitude as he had never seen gathered in all his life, men, women, and children. They were standing on the plain, and Jesus a little way up the hill,

as his custom was, the better to make himself heard ; his twelve disciples clustered near him. Jesus was not teaching ; he appeared only lately to have ceased, for the people were still in the attitude of listeners ; but he was speaking with Philip, who looked anxious and perplexed.

All this Bar-joses saw at a glance as he skirted the crowd and came up to where Andrew stood. His master Zebedee's partner was always kind to him, and Bar-joses immediately showed him his wallet, saying, "See, Andrew, I have brought these for the Master."

"You are a thoughtful lad," said Andrew with a look of pleasure, and turning he went to Jesus, and Bar-joses heard him say, "The lad is here and has brought five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many?"

Among so many ! Bar-joses had had no thought of feeding all that multitude ; but he heard Jesus say, "Make the people sit down." Immediately the twelve disciples went down among the people and soon had them all arranged in orderly ranks, sitting in companies of fifties and hundreds upon the green grass, their bright-colored tunics and headcloths making the place look like garden-beds of gay flowers. Bar-joses counted the groups ; there were quite five thousand men, besides another group of women and children sitting by themselves.

While they were taking their seats Jesus turned to Bar-joses and said, "Bring the food to me."

With what delight did the boy give to his Master the

provisions he had brought for him ! But how his delight was changed to rapturous wonder ! For now the people were all ranged in order, and the disciples had come up and were standing on either side of Jesus, and Jesus lifted his eyes to heaven and uttered the prayer of blessing said by every pious father at the board around which his children are gathered : “ Blessed art Thou, Jehovah, our Lord, King of the world, who causest to come forth bread from the earth.”

Then Jesus began to break the bread and to divide the little fishes and to give the pieces to the disciples. And the disciples went back and forth, back and forth, between the multitude and Jesus, and the wondering Bar-joses saw that they were always laden with pieces of bread and fish which the Master had broken from the five loaves and the two little fishes that he himself had brought !

It was a long time before that great multitude was served, but when all had had enough Jesus said to the disciples, “ Gather up the broken pieces that remain that nothing may be lost.”

It did not seem strange to Bar-joses that the Lord, who had so easily multiplied the food, should be careful of the fragments. He had never before so realized the preciousness of bread as now when he saw it multiply beneath the Master’s hand ; and he saw that every gift of God is all the more precious just because it is the gift of God. But the wonder was that when the broken pieces were gathered up they filled twelve baskets !

When the multitude saw this they burst into wild

shouts: "The King!" "Israel's King!" they cried; "Messiah King!" "To Jerusalem, and set him to reign over us!" "Down with Herod!" "Freedom from Rome!" "Israel will have no King but the Messiah!"

The tumult was so great that it seemed as if the children in the crowd would surely be trampled under foot. Bar-joses saw that the disciples were much agitated, that John and Peter and James especially were eagerly urging something upon Jesus. But Jesus wore that air of command which few ever thought of resisting, surely none who loved him; in a few minutes the disciples went down the hill, crossed the plain, and embarked in their little ship. The multitude stared after them in dismay. The disciples of Jesus would surely not be leaving him if he were going to be made king. And now they heard the voice of Jesus, soothing, calming, commanding; and by degrees the excitement quieted down, the crowd melted away, and Jesus was left alone on the hill. And Bar-joses, knowing what the Master did when he was alone, reverently turned away and took the road homeward under the early moon.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW THE MULTITUDE FELT WHEN THE LORD WOULD NOT BE MADE KING.

THE next day Capernaum was crowded with strangers, for nearly all those Passover pilgrims from the regions north of the lake, who had been so wonderfully fed the night before, had come to Capernaum instead of keeping on their way to Jerusalem. They still believed that Jesus would consent to be a mere human king, a rival of Herod or Cæsar; they had not learned that he was already ruling over his kingdom, and that it was for them to go to him and enter that kingdom, not to ask Jesus to come and rule over such a kingdom as they could make for him.

But Jesus was not there. Bar-joses, who had been sent on an errand to a village in the plain of Genesareth, came suddenly upon him and the disciples; they had landed a little below and were walking towards Capernaum. Bar-joses was astounded at the sight, for he had seen the disciples in the boat and Jesus going up the hill alone; but the next moment he forgot this in the delight and awe with which he looked upon his Lord. For Jesus seemed fairly radiant with power and with love; he walked as if on air; his whole person seemed to shed abroad a sense of strength and health. All along the wayside were lying the sick and the blind

and the lame and paralyzed whom their friends had brought in beds and laid where he was about to walk. And it seemed as if he did not need to touch or even speak to them ; if they but reached out and touched his garment they were healed at once.

Before long John explained to Bar-joses how Jesus came to be with them ; he had joined them in the night, walking on the water to come to their boat. They had been terrified when they saw him, thinking it was a ghost.

“Oh, why ?” asked Bar-joses. “Look at him now as he walks and the sick people rise up well from touching him ; do you think there is *any thing* he could not do ?”

“No,” answered John, a great light flashing out from his eyes. “When we saw that, and when Peter jumped out of the boat to walk on the water to go to him, and did walk until he looked at the waves and was terrified, and when Jesus took him by the hand and led him back to the boat, then we all knew, Bar-joses, that he was Lord of all that is in heaven and in earth ; and we worshipped him and called him the Son of God.”

Bar-joses did not know, nor did any of the disciples suspect, that this day on which their Master seemed so full of strength and power was the turning-point in his life. They did not expect him to become a mere earthly king, as those did who did not know him ; but they did expect that now all hearts would be given to him, and that his rule of holiness and love would go on from this day extending till all Israel came to own him as Master and Lord.

But as soon as they got to Capernaum they saw that it would not be so. Great multitudes came at once to meet him, but they only asked him for a sign by which they might be sure who he was. It was market-day and the synagogue was open, and Jesus went there and preached, explaining the true meaning of the wondrous meal that he had given the multitude the day before. He told them that he was the living bread that came down from heaven; that he himself had come from heaven to reveal God to men, and to do His will, and that men who desired eternal life must accept him and take him for the very sustenance of their lives, as they take their food and drink.

Bar-joses heard it all with rapture; it was beginning to seem to him very clear and very natural. But as he looked around over the congregation he saw that the people were not pleased; they were murmuring to one another and finding fault with his words, and when at last the service was over, instead of following him about as usual, so that he could get no rest, they turned coldly from him, and those who did not live in Capernaum soon left the town.

For the first time in many months Jesus and the twelve walked through the streets alone; even those who had long been his disciples kept coldly aloof. The humble fisher boy was almost their only follower as they walked to the house of Zebedee, which Salome had asked them to consider their home during this stay in Capernaum.

When they went into the house and were set down

Jesus was silent for a little while, a look of deep sadness on his face. The disciples kept silence in reverent sympathy, but at last he looked around upon them with an expression of love that was to them the more precious because it seemed to appeal to their love, and asked, "Would you also go away?"

With intense feeling Peter exclaimed, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

The expression of joy came back again to Jesus' eyes as Peter went on, in a voice of deep and reverent feeling, "and we believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

Again Jesus looked round upon them all with the joy of one who looks upon a precious treasure. Yet presently a shade passed over his face and he said, "Did I not choose you twelve, and one of you is an adversary?"

No one answered him; it seemed to them that they could not have heard correctly. Bar-joses, who had been standing respectfully in the doorway, was obliged to go to his work, but as his hands were busy with his toil he was wondering in his mind if it could possibly be that any one who had really known Jesus could be anything else but his friend and lover.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HOW OBED LEARNED TO BELIEVE.

A few days later Jesus and his disciples went away, but not to the Passover, where every one in Capernaum who could go was now gone, for Jesus knew that his presence there might lead the Jews to try to make him king and so bring down the displeasure of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, upon them. He wanted to be alone with his twelve disciples for a time, and instruct them more perfectly, now that they had come to see that he must be really the Son of God. And so he led them away to the northward, in the direction of Phœnicia, and for some time Bar-joses saw nothing of them.

Antipas was gone to the Passover ; he was to remain in Jerusalem for a whole year in his Uncle Nicodemus's house, that he might study at the feet of the celebrated Rabbi Gamaliel. His absence made Bar-joses feel the loneliness all the more ; but little Janna was in Capernaum, and Tabitha, and they still took pleasure in meeting at Mary's to talk about Jesus. And every one of these three children whom the Lord loved had a greater pleasure still ; it was in feeling sure that all that they did, study, work, play even, they were doing with love to Jesus in their hearts, as his true disciples and servants.

One day, as Bar-joses and Janna were out in the

market-place together, they met a man whom they had both known in their old home, Nazareth. It was Obed, the father of poor Nathan. "Tell me where Jesus is," said Obed, speaking harshly as he always did, yet with some anxiety.

"Oh," exclaimed Janna with delight, "are you going to be his disciple too?"

Obed scowled and did not answer, and Bar-joses asked after Nathan.

"He is worse," said Obed abruptly, "a great deal worse, and they are all talking so much about Jesus curing such complaints, I thought perhaps I might as well try and see if he could do anything for the boy."

"Why, of course he can!" said Janna. "He always cures every one that asks him."

"It's not likely he has had so hard a case to cure as my poor Nathan," said the father gloomily. "I'm afraid there's not much hope. It's only a last resort. But where is Jesus? I've brought Nathan here—a pretty hard journey, I can tell you."

"I'm sorry," said Bar-joses, "but Jesus isn't here now. He has been away a good while."

"And you don't know where he is?" asked Obed in a discouraged tone.

"We hear about him now and then," replied Bar-joses. "He was near Tyre, and there they say he healed a Greek woman's daughter who must have been as badly off as Nathan."

"A Greek woman!" said Obed, with his old sneer. "Why should he care about Gentiles?"

“And then he was in the Decapolis beyond the lake, and there he did some very mighty works,” went on Bar-joses, “and yesterday a man whose eyes he had opened came from Bethsaida Julias, and said he had gone northward toward Cesarea Philippi.”

Obed uttered a sound between a scoff and a groan. “If I were to follow him, I don’t see how I could get Nathan there,” he said.

“You don’t need to take Nathan,” said Janna. “He cured Antipas when he was ’way off, and the centurion’s servant too, didn’t he, Bar-joses?”

“Nonsense!” sneered Obed; “you needn’t try to make me believe that. No; I’d take Nathan there and give him that one chance if I could.”

“Obed,” said Bar-joses, “I’ll tell you what! My mistress, Salome, would be glad, I’m sure, to send some things to her sons and to Jesus. She will let me go if I ask her, and then I can help you with Nathan.”

Obed looked touched, but he said gruffly, “How come you to be so much interested in Nathan all at once?”

“Why, don’t you know, Obed?” asked little Janna. “It’s because we love Jesus,” and for once Obed did not sneer.

It was as Bar-joses had thought; Salome was pleased with the suggestion that he should carry some comforts to Jesus and to his disciples, and the next day they set forth, Bar-joses leading a donkey laden with the things which he had in charge, and Obed sometimes leading, sometimes carrying his afflicted son.

They went north along the steep valley of the Upper

Jordan, with snowy Hermon ever before them. It was not difficult to keep in the footprints of Jesus and his disciples, for every one along the way had been either interested or curious to see him. But they could not go fast, not only because Nathan was very weak, but because the violent attacks of his fearful malady were so frequent and his agony in them so great. It seemed sometimes as if they must give up the attempt. Yet they pressed on; Bar-joses was so certain that Jesus could cure the boy that he kept Obed's wavering courage up to the mark.

At last they knew that they had arrived; at the foot of a hill there was a great crowd, such as only collected where Jesus was. But when, all eagerness and hope, they had actually reached the multitude, a great disappointment met them. Andrew was there, and Matthew and Thomas and several of the other disciples, but Jesus was not there, nor Peter, James, and John. They were gone up to the top of the mountain.

The Apostles had healed demoniacs when they were out on their preaching tour, and they tried to heal Nathan, but they did not succeed. Obed was not surprised; he had known all along, he said bitterly, that he was coming on a fool's errand; and at his words a great uproar arose in the crowd over the disciples' failure. Nothing could have been worse for Nathan, but happily at that moment they saw Jesus and the three disciples coming down the hill.

"Now, now!" exclaimed Bar-joses, "go and ask him!" and he drew Obed along. All the multitude

ran to meet Jesus, and Obed among the first. Embittered as he had been at the failure of the disciples, it was almost in despair that he fell on his knees, crying, "Master, I beseech you look on my son, my only child!" He forgot that Jesus knew of his son's malady, he forgot how good Jesus had been in old times to poor Nathan, and he went on in his anguish describing how his poor epileptic son suffered, often falling into the fire in his convulsions, and often into the water. Even while he was speaking the poor child was taken with a horrible convulsion, falling on the ground and writhing and foaming at the mouth. With a groan of despair Obed exclaimed:

"If you can do *anything*, have compassion on us and help us!"

There was no faith in Jesus in the appeal, there was only desperation, as at a last resort; and so Jesus answered gently:

"If *I* can? No, rather if *you* can! All things are possible to him who believes."

And Obed saw something of the truth. He struggled to believe, and yet he could not, and once more in agony he cried, "Lord, I believe! Oh, help my unbelief!"

The countenance of Jesus was suffused with holiest pity as he turned to the boy and spoke the word of command. And the convulsions ceased, and the boy lay quiet, and then Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up and gave him to his father perfectly well.

They returned all together to Capernaum, Obed de-

terminated from that time forth to follow Jesus and be his disciple, and Nathan unspeakably happy to be near Jesus, who had been so good to him. But Bar-joses went back as one stunned with grief, for on the way Jesus told them that he was one day to be put to death by wicked men; and though he told them also that he should rise again on the third day, Bar-joses could not understand what that could mean. John and Peter and the other disciples after much perplexed discussion came to the conclusion that it must be one of Jesus' parables, that he must mean that the Pharisees and Scribes would put him down for a little while, and then he would rise up again with greater power; and Bar-joses at last concluded that he could not mean anything else.

One day, however, Jesus said things that made them all understand a little better than they had ever done before just what his servants had to do in his kingdom. He had been talking alone with the twelve; but presently he called all the others to him, and Bar-joses and Nathan sat very close beside him, as he always loved to have the children do. And then he said:

"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Bar-joses knew that the Romans put criminals to death on the cross, and he understood very well that these words meant that the disciples of Jesus must be ready to bear any suffering for his sake.

And then Jesus went on: "Whoever tries to save his life shall lose it, but whoever will lose his life for my sake shall save it." And that Bar-joses also could

understand, for he knew by his own experience that since he had lost his own life in love of Jesus, and had ceased to care for things except as Jesus cared for them, or as they affected the interests of his kingdom, he had found a joy in living, and a beauty and preciousness in everything that he had never known before.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HOW THE LORD WAS RECEIVED AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

IN these perplexing days, when so many people had turned away from Jesus, his faithful followers were much disturbed by confusion of mind about the kingdom. Evidently it was not going to be the way they had expected—everybody gradually coming to believe in Jesus and follow him, until at last the whole nation would be his followers. And if not this way, how was it to be? One day a little group had gathered on the seaside—Jesus, his twelve disciples, his mother and his four brothers, Obed, and the four children, Bar-joses, Nathan, Tabitha, and little Janna. James and John, Simon and Judas Lebbæus, had for some time been talking of the way the kingdom would be finally organized when at last all the people had accepted Jesus; and they presently appealed to Jesus with the question, “Who will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

For a moment Jesus did not answer; then beckoning to Janna, who was playing with Nathan at one side, he set the little boy in the middle of the group and said, “Whoever shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

The four who had appealed to Jesus looked at one

another as if they did not understand, and John said, "Master, will you explain to us this parable?"

And Jesus answered, "You must become as little children in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, and he that is least among you, the most like a little child, is the great one."

While Jesus spoke Janna looked up into his face with an expression of such heart-whole confidence, such entire self-forgetfulness, that John, in the great love he bore his Master, saw as in a flash of light the meaning of his words. The true greatness was never to think of self. This was the example Jesus was always setting, and in this, John saw, the simple-hearted children were most like him. But the others did not yet understand, and Simon asked again, "Lord, what makes the little child great?"

And Jesus smiled and took Janna in his arms and said, "Whoever receives a little child like this in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives not me but Him that sent me."

At that a solemn reverence fell upon them all, for they knew that He who had sent Jesus was God. And they saw that to receive God was indeed to be great, but that He could not be received into any heart that was occupied with self. And presently Jesus said, in a tone of such awful solemnity that they never forgot it, "Whoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe in me to stumble, it were better for him that a great millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea."

The disciples of Jesus had always been kind to the children, but after this they were most careful of them, both because Jesus loved them and because he had given a little child as a model for the members of his kingdom.

In Jerusalem about this time Antipas and Mark were eagerly intent upon preparations for the Feast of Tabernacles. Antipas had never been in Jerusalem before at this feast, which came in the autumn after all the harvests had been gathered in, but Mark had told him all about it—how gay the city was, how full of merriment and jollity, no one staying in his house, but every one, except the women and little babies, living in booths or leafy “tabernacles” made of green branches. The boys had helped in the building of the booths; Antipas in the splendid court of his uncle’s palace, Mark on the roof of his father’s house. Both were eagerly expecting friends; Antipas, his father and his father’s young friend, Lazarus of Bethany, and Mark his mother’s friend, Peter, and the four brothers of Jesus. But he had not heard whether Jesus was coming or not.

On the day before the feast the two boys, having finished their preparations, took a long walk to see the transformed city. Every street and public square, every court and housetop, every garden, and all the fields outside the town as far as a Sabbath day’s journey, were green with the booths of fresh-cut branches; the crowds were nearly as great as at the Passover time, and every one was gay and mirthful. Wherever people were talking seriously it was always about Jesus—would he



JEWES OF JERUSALEM.

come to the feast? Nearly every one expected him to come.

The day the great Galilean caravan entered the city, Mark and Agrippa joined a large party of Jerusalem Jews who were going out to meet it, carrying the palm branches bound with willow, which were the emblems of the feast. "Where is he?" they asked of everybody in the caravan; "is he not coming to the feast?" And then there was much animated discussion, some saying, "He is a good man," and others saying, "He is a deceiver;" but in this discussion neither of the boys took part. They had found Peter and the other disciples and the brothers of Jesus, but Jesus was not with them.

Early next morning the boys were waiting near the temple to join the joyous procession that went with music and rejoicing down the long steps from the temple mount to the deep Tyropæan valley, and so through the valley of the Kidron to the pool of Siloam. There the priest who led them drew water in a golden pitcher, according to the Psalm, "with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation."

And then it was carried back to the temple, and received with blasts of the silver trumpets, and poured into a silver basin at the side of the altar, while the wine of the drink-offering was poured on the other side, and the great temple choir burst forth in the singing of the Hallel, the fresh voices of the Levite children rising high above the deep bass of the men singers. Then the sacrifices were offered, and while the smoke

of the sacrifices was rising up from the altar the whole company of priests formed a procession and marched around it, singing, "O then, now work salvation, Jehovah!"

The afternoon was given up to the festive meal, but in the evening the whole city came to the temple to see the lighting of the four great golden candelabras, fifty feet high, which were placed in the Court of the Women, and so illumined the city that there was not a court in all Jerusalem from which the darkness was not chased away by the light from the temple. While the young sons of priests were on the high ladders lighting the lamps a company of temple attendants danced before the people with lighted torches in their hands, and a great orchestra of Levites, with harps and lutes and all sorts of instruments, stood on the steps leading down from the Court of Israel, playing and singing hymns, while two priests came down the steps blowing trumpets and marched through to the Beautiful Gate on the east, and then turning faced the Holy Place and said, "Our eyes are toward the Lord."

The sight was most inspiring, as day after day these ceremonies were repeated. The splendor of lights and music and the magnetism of immense crowds wrought strongly upon Antipas. He had never realized before the majesty of Israel's worship of God.

At home, at the festive meals, the talk was much about Jesus. Lazarus and Nicodemus, who had many acquaintances, said that every one was wondering whether, after all, he would not come. But on the third day

of the feast Mark, coming to see Antipas, brought word that Jesus had arrived.

“He was unwilling to come up with a caravan,” explained Mark, “because they would have tried again to make him king as they did at Bethsaida last Passover season.”

“Such an attempt would be disastrous indeed,” said Chuza, “here, under the very eyes of the Roman guard, doubled, as usual at a feast time.”

“Why won’t people understand that Jesus knows best, father?” asked Antipas. “He will tell them when he is ready to be made king.”

The next day, as they were all in the temple, Jesus came, and standing in one of the porticoes began to teach the people. He had recognized Antipas and Mark with one of those smiles that always thrilled their hearts, and he looked pleasantly on them as they found a place on the pedestal of one of the columns, close beside where he was standing. He told the multitude that his teaching came from God, and that any one who truly desired to do God’s will would know that his teaching was true.

“A great many believed in Jesus as he was speaking to-day,” said Lazarus as they sat at table that evening.

Nicodemus looked very grave. “The Sanhedrin have given orders to the temple guard to arrest him,” he said.

Everybody exclaimed with horror; it seemed impossible that enmity could go so far as that.

“Do you suppose he will keep away from the temple?” asked Lazarus.

“Jesus is never afraid,” said Antipas a little proudly but with something swelling in his throat.

Jesus did not come again until the last day, “the great day of the feast,” “the day of the great Hosanna,” as it was called, when the priests made a sevenfold circuit round the altar and all the palm branches were beaten into pieces beside it.

The two boys were standing where they could see it all; the water had been poured out from the golden pitcher for the last time for a whole year; the Hallel had been sung, the threefold blasts of the silver trumpets had sounded; a forest of palm branches was being waved toward the altar, when they heard a voice sounding clear and strong through all the temple courts, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.” It was Jesus, the boys knew, and they listened breathlessly in the great hush of the people, while he went on to tell of the blessedness of all who believed in him, how he would not only quench their own soul-thirst, but make them a blessing to others.

When he ceased there was an uproar of excitement, many saying, “Truly this is the prophet we are expecting,” and others, “This is the Christ!”

But some were perplexed because he came from Galilee, whereas they thought the Christ would come from Bethlehem. And while they were discussing this question Jesus went away.

That evening Rabbi Joseph came to visit Nicodemus, and they talked of the events of the day.

"I did not at all approve of our council sending the temple officers to arrest Jesus to-day," Rabbi Joseph said.

"Did they do that?" exclaimed Chuza.

"They feared an uprising of the people and a proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah," answered Nicodemus.

"But he was not arrested?" asked Lazarus.

"No, the officers were so impressed by his manner or something that they could not," replied Joseph. "'Never man spoke like this man,' was all they had to say when they came back to us without him."

"But, oh, uncle!" cried Antipas, "you won't let Jesus be arrested, will you?"

Nicodemus looked grave, but Joseph said:

"Your uncle spoke up manfully for him to-day, Antipas, appealing to law and justice. They taunted him for it, but he maintained his point."

"Things are looking dark for Jesus, I fear," said Chuza with a sigh.

Antipas looked from one to another in distress. Then suddenly a light broke over his face. "I am sure Jesus will know what to do," he said, "and he is our Messiah, whether they believe it or not."

CHAPTER XXVIX.

HOW TROUBLE BEGAN TO GATHER ABOUT THE LORD.

AGAIN Mark and Antipas heard Jesus speak in the temple, on the day called the Octave of the Feast, the eighth since it began, which was observed like a Sabbath.

“I am the light of the world,” he said, and the boys both knew that he had in a manner taken his text from the golden candelabra that had been the light of Jerusalem all the past week. Every one who heard him knew that this was the same as to say he was the Messiah ; but the rabbis interrupted him, they did not want such a Messiah as he. Still, a great many believed that what he said was true, and he went on teaching them about himself, how he could make them free from the slavery of sin ; and finally, when the Pharisees still sneered and contradicted, he plainly told them that he was not only now the Son of God, but that he had been so before he was born into the world as a man. “Before Abraham was, I AM !” he said.

When he said the words even Antipas was astounded, but when the boy saw the Pharisees rush to gather up stones to stone Jesus for blasphemy, Antipas knew that those words were really true, for he saw the look that Jesus gave the infuriated Pharisees, a look of such majesty that they stopped short in their murderous at-

tack, as if some person had checked them, and looked blankly at him, while he calmly walked out of the temple.

Antipas went home with his mind in a ferment. Yes, he had long believed that Jesus was the Son of God; but to think that he had once lived with God, had known all the glory and dominion and majesty of heaven, and yet had come to earth to live as he was living, and to let wicked men sneer at him and accuse him of wickedness! Oh, the love, the love for men that must have made him do this! How could Antipas ever be loyal enough to him? What service would ever be too hard, what suffering too great, to show his love to one who so loved men?

The feast was already over; the parents of Antipas had gone home, and now Jesus and his brothers went away from Mark's house, and the boys' regular routine life of study began again. And soon up in Capernaum the children were happy, for Jesus came back to them.

He had only come back for a little while, he told them, and he was much occupied in choosing, from among those disciples who had been most faithful to him, seventy whom he proposed to send out by two and two to every city and village where he had ever preached. When he had done this he went around making farewell visits among his friends, for he had decided to leave Capernaum and go to Jerusalem. But he was not too busy to gather the children around him. Little Janna and Nathan and Tabitha were with him a great deal during those few days.

Bar-joses, who heard everything that was going on, heard some of the Pharisees advising Jesus to go away, because Herod was plotting to kill him. John had told the boy of the enmity of the Pharisees and priests of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem; of their attempts to arrest him, and how it was only the majesty of Jesus, and the presence at the feast of great numbers of people from Galilee who believed in him, which had prevented their carrying out their plots. And when Bar-joses heard the counsel of the Galilean Pharisees and the majestic answer of Jesus, who was not to be hurried in his plans by any such warning, his mind was made up. Henceforth for good or for ill he would follow Jesus. Whether his kingdom was ever to be set up on earth or not did not matter; Jesus was king in his heart, and he felt as if, now that the rulers were turning against him, his true servants ought to rally close around him.

All the friends of Jesus knew now that trouble was about him; that though countless numbers believed in and loved him, the rulers were against him; and this had made a great many draw back from him. And therefore they could not help wondering at the impression that he always gave them of being more than ever full of joy. They wondered all the more, because he was at the same time sorrowful. On the day when he sent the Seventy forth, he spoke such words of sad warning to those cities that had known him best, Capernaum and the neighboring towns, that they knew his heart was aching sorely, not with disappointment for himself, but with grief for those who had failed to believe in

him ; and yet all the time it seemed as if deep down in his heart the fountain of joy was still flowing, and sometimes it seemed to bubble up and overflow his whole being, making his face almost glorious, as if from a light within. The children sometimes heard the women who knew him best, Joanna and Rachel and Jesus' mother and Mary of Magdala, speaking of this with awe and wonder ; they themselves felt it, though they would not have known what it was they felt if they had not been told.

It was indeed when the children were around him that his joy seemed deepest, or at least most evident. One day when they were all sitting at his feet, listening to the words he was saying to a multitude who had gathered round him as in the old times, he suddenly broke off, and looking at the children, at Bar-joses and Tabitha and Nathan and Janna, with a joy that made their hearts thrill in response, he exclaimed : " I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes ; yea, Father ; for so it was well pleasing in Thy sight ! " And to Bar-joses it almost seemed as if the love of the children and their simple acceptance of his teaching was in part the reason of his going on to say to the multitude : " All things have been delivered to me of my Father, and no man knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

And then a great wave of pity seemed to sweep over

his face, and stretching out his arms to the multitude he exclaimed in that voice of sweet compassion which they had so often heard, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest to your souls ; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Bar-joses and all the children, even little Janna, understood what Jesus meant in saying that his yoke was easy. From their babyhood they had heard duty of all kinds spoken of as a yoke, but the special yoke was that of the law, and that had been made very heavy by the hundreds of commands that the rabbis had added to the Law of Moses. And every one of these children knew how light was the yoke of Jesus, how easy it was to obey one who loved them so, and made them his true friends and cherished companions.

And Bar-joses was old enough to feel to the very depths of his heart the truth of what Jesus said to the disciples after he had sent the multitude away : "Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings have longed to see the things that you see and to hear the things that you hear."

CHAPTER XXX.

HOW THOSE WHO LOVED THE LORD CAST IN THEIR LOT
WITH HIM.

It was not long before Jesus was ready to bid farewell to Capernaum.

There were others besides Bar-joses who had resolved to follow Jesus. His mother and her sister Salome, the mother of James and John; and Mary of Magdala, whose life had been devoted to his service since he had cured her of her dreadful malady; and Mary, the wife of Clopas, the sister-in-law of Jesus' mother, and mother of James the Little and Judas Lebbæus and Simon the Zealot; and Obed and Nathan, and even Ezra and Ruth and the little Janna were of his party. They all loved him most devotedly, and they were all willing to go through any privation for his sake, and nearly all of them believed that the glorious end was near at hand, that before very long the enmity of even the Sanhedrin would be overcome by his goodness, and all Israel would own Jesus as their King.

They did not propose to follow him in idleness, or be dependent on the kindness of those who loved Jesus. Ezra carried with him his pack; Obed had his trade of wool-carder, and proposed to find employment in any village where they might sojourn a day or two. Bar-

joses was ready to do any sort of work that he could find. The women had enough to do in looking after the comfort of the Master and his disciples and caring for the children.

The hospitable habits of those times made them sure of a welcome and a night's lodging everywhere, and in case there should not be accommodation for so many in the small villages, there was no man or boy among them all that would not gladly sleep out-of-doors, even in the nights of the winter which was now drawing near, for the sake of being with Jesus.

They set out to go by the nearest way, through Samaria, but as the party was so large and the Samaritans did not generally feel kindly toward the Jews, Jesus sent James and John forward to ask for hospitality. But the company had hardly reached the borders of Samaria when they met James and John coming to meet them in a tempest of wrath; the Samaritans refused to receive them. Such an insult to their Lord seemed unendurable, especially from the hated Samaritans; in hot indignation they asked him if they might not call down fire from heaven, as Elijah had once done, and burn up the whole village.

None of the children ever forgot the expression of Jesus' face, or the tones of his voice, as he gently answered the two fiery brothers: "You do not know the spirit of your own calling. The Son of Man did not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." And at those words John and James recalled to mind that not one of their Mas-

ter's miracles had ever been done in the slightest degree for his own benefit, and they understood better than ever before the purpose of their calling as Apostles. But to Bar-joses the last part of what Jesus' said, "To give his life a ransom for many," blotted out the impression of the rest, for with anguish of heart he recalled the words that Jesus had spoken in northern Galilee, that he should be killed and rise again. Oh, what did it mean?

It was late and they were tired, but they cheerfully followed Jesus as he turned away from Samaria and went down toward the fords of the Jordan through the green valley of Jezreel. At Beth Shean they passed the night. It was only a mile away from the place where Bar-joses had first believed in Jesus; and late though it was, he went out when all the evening work was done, and every one had lain down to sleep, and walked to the brink of the deep river cleft, looking across it to the road up which, on that blessed day that had made life new for him, he had seen Jesus walking, with glory and joy upon his face. As he stood there thinking of it, he heard a step beside him; it was John, whom already they were beginning to call the "Disciple whom Jesus loves." He had come, like Bar-joses, to look upon a place most sacred to him.

The next day they crossed the river into Perea by the ferry that connected the two parts of the great caravan route, and here they spent several happy weeks. Here the prophet John had preached and baptized and proclaimed Jesus as the Lamb of God, and some of the Seventy had only lately passed this way, teaching the

Pereans about Jesus ; so they received him gladly. In one or another of their villages he would stay for days at a time, and the people gathered around him and listened to his teachings as the Galileans had done in the earlier days.

And though Bar-joses and the other children had heard many wonderful words from his lips, they now heard teachings which seemed to them more beautiful, more tender, more easy to understand, than anything he had ever said before.

One thing that Bar-joses noticed about Jesus in these days was that he was much in prayer. The boy had often known Jesus to pray ; in the early mornings when he was going about his work he had many a time met him coming in from some solitary place with a light on his countenance, as if he had been looking toward the sun ; but now he noticed that he often withdrew a little from the company and prayed, and many of his parables had for their purpose to encourage them all to pray. One day, in answer to the request of some of the Pereans who had become his disciples, he taught them how to pray, and Bar-joses and Nathan and Janna, kneeling with them, repeated from his lips the prayer that every Christian child from that day to this has learned to say, " Our Father who art in heaven."

Another thing that made this journey beautiful was that Jesus seemed, if possible, more than ever to love to have the children with him. Once the mothers of a certain village, seeing that he was surrounded by children, took courage to bring their own little ones to



MOTHERS BRINGING THEIR CHILDREN.

him, babies and little clinging ones, such as Janna had been two or three years before, and asked him to lay his hands on them and bless them. The three brothers, Judas Lebbæus and Simon the Zealot and James the Little, as they called him to distinguish him from John's tall brother, wanted to send these poor mothers away, lest so many children should disturb Jesus, but Jesus said, "Let the little children come unto me; do not forbid them, for they are of the kind who belong to the kingdom of heaven." And he called to the little ones and took them in his arms, and laid his hands on their little heads and blessed them; and when he gave them back to their mothers, he said to his disciples, "I tell you truly you must receive the kingdom of God in the spirit of a little child, or you cannot enter it."

A few weeks passed like this, and then Jesus left his friends for a few days, for he wanted to keep the mid-winter Feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem. Bar-joses could not go with him; indeed, he wished to take no one except the twelve; perhaps he wanted to see how the Sanhedrin were feeling toward him, and did not wish to do anything to arouse public excitement; at least this thought occurred to Bar-joses, and perhaps he was right.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HOW ANTIPAS SAW THE LORD AT THE FEAST OF LIGHTS.

ON the afternoon before the Feast of the Dedication Antipas and Mark went out to Bethany to visit their friends, Lazarus and Mary. And there they found Jesus! Martha had sent him an invitation by two of the Seventy to pass the time of this feast at her house, and he had accepted it.

When the boys got there they found Martha bustling about, taking care that things should be especially nice for Jesus; but Mary was sitting at his feet, listening to his teaching. Antipas did not wonder that she could not think of work when she could hear the Master talk, and knowing Jesus as he did, he was sure that Mary was doing what would best please him. He soon learned that he was right, for presently Martha came out and asked Jesus to bid Mary come and help her, and not leave her to do everything alone. And Jesus looked at her with a smile that was half sympathy and half reproof, and said, "Martha, Martha, you are full of your household cares, and have many things on your mind; but one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen for herself the good part which shall not be taken away from her." Then Martha saw that with one like Jesus, whose whole life was given to making people better, it was a far

higher honor to care for what he said than to serve him, no matter how luxuriously.

The next Sabbath, when Antipas went with his uncle to the temple service, every one was telling how Jesus had given sight to a man who was born blind, a thing never supposed possible before. And when he went to the evening service at three o'clock, Mark told him that people were saying that the Sanhedrin, not daring again to bring up against Jesus the accusation of breaking the Sabbath law, had tried in vain to prove that the man who said he had been healed was only an impostor. Jesus had come into Jerusalem, Mark said, and was spending the Sabbath at his mother's house, and after sunset Nicodemus and Antipas went to see him.

Many other people had come to see him, and Jesus told a parable which few of those present could quite understand, but which went to the heart of Antipas with a sharp pang, boy though he was. He and the other Capernaum children had often heard Jesus tell about the good shepherd who sought the wandering sheep and saved it from the wolf, but in these stories the shepherd had always come back rejoicing, bringing with him the sheep that had been lost, having saved it from the ravenous beast. But in this story the wolf killed the sheep, and Jesus plainly told his hearers that he meant himself. "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." What could it mean? No one surely could be wicked enough actually to kill Jesus! "Therefore the Father loves me, because I lay down my life for the sheep," Jesus

went on; "no one takes it from me, but I lay it down myself."

At these words Antipas remembered with a flash the words of Jesus that his Uncle Nicodemus had told him, "God so loved the world." It all seemed part of one thing—was it for the sake of the sheep who would not be saved that the good shepherd was willing to give up his life in fighting the wolf? And as he looked at Jesus he thought he had never seen such an expression of love and joy and power as shone in his face as he went on, "I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again." Oh, what could such words mean? As Antipas hung upon Jesus' words with all his heart in his eyes, he thought that the Master looked upon him and smiled.

The next day was the Feast of the Dedication, or, as the children called it, the Feast of Lights.

In every house a candle was lighted for each member of the household. Each day of the festival week an additional candle would be lighted for each person, so that in a house like that of Nicodemus, where there were numerous servants, there would be more than a hundred candles burning on the seventh day, and every house in the city, however poor, would be brightly illuminated. But though Antipas was interested in the illuminations, he was more interested in Jesus, and he spent nearly all his time in Bethany hearing him talk.

Jesus did not go often to the temple during this feast, but one day Antipas and Mark found him there walking in the portico called Solomon's Porch, where the winter sun shone most beautifully. The Pharisees

came and asked him to tell them plainly if he was the Messiah, but it was clear enough that they were only trying to find some reason to accuse him. Antipas, whose whole soul was filled with indignation at the plots of the Sanhedrin, could not help wondering at the patience with which Jesus answered, "I have told you and you do not believe." Then he went on to say that their question showed that they were not his sheep, for the sheep recognized the voice of the shepherd. And looking around at his disciples and Antipas and Mark, who stood a little apart, he added with that expression of love and power which they knew so well, "And I know my sheep and they shall never perish, and I give them eternal life, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Many times in the trials that came to him when he was a man, long after Jesus had gone away, Antipas remembered these words, and the countenance of his Lord as he spoke them.

It did not startle Antipas now to hear Jesus add, "I and the Father are one;" but the Pharisees immediately flew to take up stones to stone him for blasphemy. Jesus calmly stood his ground and argued his statement with them, and though they would not accept his teachings, they dared not throw the stones. And so when he had finished he went quietly away. But he did not remain longer in Jerusalem. As Nicodemus sadly told Antipas, he had given the Sanhedrin one more opportunity to accept him, and they had refused it. He went back to Perea, where his friends were awaiting him, and Antipas saw him no more for a while,

CHAPTER XXXII.

HOW IN PEREA THEY WERE GLAD TO SEE THE LORD
RETURN.

IN Perea they rejoiced to have him back. To Bar-joses and the other children it was like the rising of the sun on a new day. They went back now to that village of Bethany on the bank of the Jordan, where the Baptist had so long been preaching, and where Jesus had first been pointed out as the Lamb of God. The synagogue rulers of the neighboring villages sent for him to preach; some of the Pharisees invited him to dine with them; and at this time the despised tax-gatherers and the notorious sinners began to gather round him in great numbers. Perhaps it was this that made him teach in plainer language than ever before; and when the Scribes and Pharisees of Perea complained at his receiving these common wicked people, he told some of the most beautiful parables he ever uttered. Even Janna and Nathan understood them, and they gave to Bar-joses a new view of the love of God for men—that he does not hate sinners, but longs to see them repent and be made good, longs for this with all the love of a Father's heart. The parable in which Bar-joses most clearly learned this was one about the Prodigal Son. The story was of a father who had two beloved sons—

so well beloved that even during his own lifetime he gave to each an abundant portion of goods, making them, if they chose to be so, independent and free to do as they liked. The elder son, however, dutifully remained at home, a comfort and joy to his father's heart, but the younger chose to leave home and plunge into wild and riotous living. The father, whose heart always yearned over him in love and who knew what must be the end of such a course, was always on the watch for the beloved though wayward son to come back, and one day he saw him a long way off returning, a ragged famished wretch. The wayward son had squandered all his wealth and been reduced to starvation. He had fallen so low as to be obliged to hire himself out to feed swine, a most degrading occupation for a Jew, for only Gentiles kept swine, and he must serve a Gentile master. And while thus wretched he had thought with regret of his father's house and the luxuries that even the hired servants there enjoyed, and he had resolved to go back and confess his sin to his father and ask for a servant's place in his house.

But when he saw that outraged father running to meet him a long way off with no reproof on his countenance, but only love and joy to see his son returning, he realized that he had quite mistaken his father's love. He saw that no matter how great his sin, his father was always ready to forgive, that it was impossible for a father to make a servant of his son, or even to think of him as anything but a son. He saw that a father is one who loves through all outrage and neglect and is glad to

forgive the repentant child. And so he fell on his knees and confessed his sin, but said nothing about being a servant. How could he when now for the first time in his life he understood what it was to be A SON?

Then the father raised him up from his knees and called to his servants to clothe him in robes of honor and prepare a feast of welcome, with invited guests, for the great joy of a father's heart over a repenting son needs the fellowship of others in its joy.

The elder brother, being only a brother and not a father, did not understand this, and thought at first that to welcome the wayward son was to do injustice to himself who had always been obedient. But the father reminded him that the perfect love and companionship which had always been between themselves was in itself the best reward for well doing, and that the nearer he was, by love, to his father, the more he would rejoice in the return of his brother to the joys he himself had always known.

There were still many in these days who wanted to become the disciples of Jesus, but now, as Bar-joses and all the twelve observed, he would not have them to do it without considering all that it might cost them, and he told them a parable of the king, who before he declares war considers whether he is ready with ten thousand men to meet the enemy who will bring twenty thousand, explaining that to be his disciple one must be ready, if necessary, to give up all who are dearest to him, and even his own life.

When some of them were inclined to be exclusive, he showed them by a parable of a man who had been robbed and wounded and was succored by a Samaritan, that every one was their neighbor to whom they had an opportunity to be kind.

And so day after day he taught them more and more of the nature of the kingdom and of what they who were its citizens ought to be.

One teaching especially impressed Bar-joses; it was about being faithful in duty even though their Lord might be absent. "Be always like men that are expecting their Master home, that when he comes and knocks he may find you ready to open the door at once. Blessed are those servants whom the Master, when he comes, shall find watching. I tell you truly he will make them sit down to a feast and will himself serve them." And then first on Bar-joses's mind dawned a thought of the glorious reunion that might one day take place between the servants and their Lord, even though for a time he should go away.

So the solemn, joyous weeks went by, solemn because they all felt that a crisis was coming, joyful because Jesus was there. Even after all that had happened at Jerusalem, and all the warnings that Jesus had spoken, they still believed that it would be a glorious crisis, that Jesus would be accepted by the nation as the Messiah that he truly was. They realized that for them, his special friends and trained disciples, the responsibility would be very great; but however solemn the responsibility, they felt sure that Jesus would be with them,

and how could they be anything but joyful and triumphant?

“Do you remember, Bar-joses,” said John to him one day, “the Master’s answer to the disciples of the Baptist when they asked why we did not fast? ‘Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn while the bridegroom is with them?’ I think we were never so much like children of the bride-chamber as now—never so happy or so filled with joy in the joy of another.”

“Yes,” said Bar-joses with happy eyes; and suddenly the rest of Jesus’ saying came into his mind, “but the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them—they will fast in those days.”

Was this their time of joy, and was the coming time to be a time of sorrow? It did not seem possible, they were so happy in him, growing so much from day to day in understanding of what he desired them to be and of what his kingdom was to be; and he seemed to be so happy in them, their love, their joyful service, their rapt attention to his teachings; what sorrow could the future bring?

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HOW HE WHOM THE LORD LOVED WAS ILL.

MANY interesting things occurred during that happy Perean winter ; some that seemed to be full of promise and some that were disappointing. One day a young man, a ruler in the little Sanhedrin of his own town, came running eagerly and, kneeling down before Jesus, asked him what he must do to inherit eternal life, which he supposed would be given to all who entered the Messiah's kingdom. He was so attractive, so earnest and enthusiastic and noble-hearted, that Bar-joses did not wonder that Jesus looked upon him with love as he reminded him that he already knew God's commandments.

"I have kept them all from my youth up," said the young man, and those who looked on his pure face saw that he was speaking the truth.

Still looking on him with love, Jesus answered :

"You lack one thing—sell all that you have and give to the poor and you shall have treasure in heaven ; and come, follow me."

Bar-joses looked to see an expression of ecstasy on the young ruler's face—to be admitted among the chosen friends of Jesus !

But the young man stood irresolute for a moment,

and then with a look of exceeding sorrow he turned away; he was very rich, and this "one thing" he could not do.

Jesus looked after him with deep sadness, and turning to his disciples said with a sigh, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of God!"

The disciples looked from one to another—they could not understand. Like all the Jews, they had always expected the kingdom of God to be one of abounding wealth. But Jesus turned to the children, who as usual were very near, and said:

"Children, how hard it is for them who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God; it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

The children, who never thought about riches, were not troubled like the disciples, and they well understood what he went on to say of the blessedness of those who were willing to leave everything and follow him. And Bar-joses, who had never had anything to leave, wished exceedingly that that noble-looking young ruler could know what he knew of the riches of blessing that he might have if he would but follow Jesus.

In the midst of this peaceful happiness came a message from Bethany, from Martha and Mary: "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick." Jesus sent back the messenger with the message that the result of the sickness was not to be death, but the glory of God and the greater glory of the Son of God; and those around him were glad to hear this. But they were troubled when two

days later he asked his disciples to go with him to Judea, for they all knew how unfriendly the Sanhedrin was to him. The disciples indeed reminded him of the fact that its adherents had even tried to stone him ; but when he showed them that he was resolved upon going, Thomas exclaimed, " Let us go with him, that we may also die with him ! " and they were all ready to do so ; for indeed they sadly feared that the messenger had not truly come from Bethany, but was the agent of some plot to kill him.

The friends of the Bethany family were full of sympathy, for Lazarus was dead. In the homes of Nicodemus and of the parents of Mark there was true sorrow, for these three families had been drawn very closely together by the tie of love to Jesus. Mark and Antipas grieved exceedingly, not so much for the loss of Lazarus as for the sorrow of his sisters. They had grown to love Mary as an older sister, she was so lovely and gentle and bright, so much interested in them, and so devoted to the Master whom they loved. They knew how much she loved Lazarus, and long before this Mark had told Antipas of the dark shadow that lay over that pleasant home and made Lazarus doubly dear and doubly necessary to his sisters—their father, Simon, was a leper, and therefore an outcast. Now in the death of their brother they seemed doubly bereaved.

There was another cause for sorrow, which Antipas and Mark felt most keenly : Jesus had known of his illness and yet Lazarus had died. The sisters had not

asked him to come—they had known that there would be risk in his coming so near to Jerusalem, and therefore in sending a messenger to tell him that his beloved friend was sick they had not asked for his presence—but he would not have needed to come to make Lazarus well. And at the very time when they received his message that this sickness was not to end in death Lazarus was already dead. It was like blank darkness to think that Jesus could make a mistake; and yet Lazarus was dead.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HOW THE LORD CAME TO HIS FRIENDS IN BETHANY.

THE funeral was over, the body of Lazarus had been lying nearly four days in the sepulchral cave. The house of mourning was still filled with the friends of the sisters, who had come from Jerusalem for the funeral and had remained to weep and condole with them. Nicodemus was there and Rabbi Joseph and many others of the Scribes and Pharisees, for the family at Bethany had many prominent friends. Mark was there with his mother, and of course Antipas was there, his heart and head alike bewildered with wondering why Lazarus had died.

Oppressed with the formal consolations of the company, he and Mark had wandered a little away from the house, when looking down the Jericho road they saw Jesus and the twelve disciples coming. Quick as thought Mark ran back to the house to tell Martha; at any other time Antipas would have run forward to give his Master a joyful welcome, but now his heart was torn with wondering, and he hastily drew back a little from the road and waited. He saw Mark disappear in the house and Martha come out, running, and as Jesus still came up the road she met him close to where Antipas stood.

Looking sadly at him, with no formal word of greeting, she said almost reproachfully, "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died."

Jesus did not reply in words; he only looked at her, but his face was so full of sympathy and power that she added eagerly, "And even now I know that whatever you ask of God, He will give it you." Antipas knew that, too, but it seemed to him that he knew more than that. Had not Jesus said one day in the temple that he had life in himself?

But Jesus was speaking; "Your brother shall rise again," he said.

Martha looked up quickly with joy, and then as if not daring to believe all that the words might mean, her eyes filled with tears, and she said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

That glorious look of power which Antipas had so often seen in Jesus' face seemed to light it up like the sun, as he answered:

"*I am the resurrection and the life; he that believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?*" he added with deep tenderness.

Martha raised her head; the tears were dried in her eyes as she exclaimed in a voice of strong conviction:

"Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was promised to come into the world."

She turned and went back to the house, but Jesus stood motionless where she had found him. Still Anti-

pas did not move ; he was still bewildered, but above his bewilderment was a feeling that to bring himself to Jesus' notice now would be an intrusion.

In a few minutes he saw the house-door open again, and Mary came running quickly, and throwing herself upon her knees at Jesus' feet, she exclaimed in a voice almost choked by sobs :

“Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died !”

Jesus did not answer her. A look of almost heart-broken sorrow swept over his face ; his form seemed to quiver with emotion. The friends who had been with the sisters in the house, seeing Mary's hasty departure, had supposed that she was going to the grave and had followed her, and now they stood about her adding their tears to hers.

A heavy groan burst from the lips of Jesus as he said, “Where have you laid him ?” and as they said, “Lord, come and see,” tears gushed from his eyes.

Antipas forgot all his confused wondering, his almost doubts ; his heart was broken at the sight of his Master's tears, and he followed him and the sisters as they went toward the tomb. Some of the Jews near him were whispering, “See how he loved him !” and others were wondering aloud, “Could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind have kept Lazarus from dying ?” But Jesus went on without speaking, with tears and heavy groans.

So they came to the tomb, a cave hollowed in a rock, the opening closed with a stone ; and now Jesus spoke

to some of those who stood near, bidding them roll away the stone.

Martha uttered a hasty word of remonstrance; Lazarus had been four days dead, and his body must already have begun to decay. But Jesus checked her with the gentle words, "Did I not say that if you believed you should see the glory of God?" And Martha stood aside and they rolled away the stone.

Then Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven, and thanked God for what was going to take place; and before Antipas, or Mary, or any one present could realize what his words meant, he cried aloud, "*Lazarus, come forth!*"

There was a stir within the tomb, and Lazarus came forth, slowly and with difficulty, not because he was weak and ill, but because he was swathed in grave clothes. And as every one stood transfixed with terror and amazement, Jesus recalled them to their senses by bidding some one loosen the wrappings that Lazarus might walk freely. For indeed he was alive and perfectly well, with no sign of death about him, except the white grave clothes.

But the joy of Antipas was mingled with deep sorrow, that he had even for a moment doubted, not the love or the power, but the wisdom of his Lord.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HOW ANTIPAS WENT BY NIGHT TO WARN THE LORD OF
DANGER.

As Nicodemus and Mark's parents, with the two boys, walked back to Jerusalem late that evening, they congratulated one another that the raising of Lazarus to life would so increase the number of Jesus' followers that the rulers would be forced to acknowledge him, whether they would or no. It seemed to Mary, Mark's mother, that now there could be nothing to delay his triumph and the open establishment of his kingdom, and though Nicodemus better understood the difficulties in the way, he felt sure they must all yield before the convincing proof that Jesus was the Messiah of his people. Of all those who saw the miracle there was hardly one who had not openly expressed his conviction that Jesus was indeed He.

At the foot of Mount Zion Samuel and Mary and Mark had said good-night and gone their own way home, and Antipas and his uncle had climbed the hill to the stately palace near the great bridge. They heard quick steps coming across the bridge in the quiet of the late evening, and they were hardly seated in the old rabbi's study when Rabbi Joseph came in, out of breath with running, and with a countenance very much disturbed. He closed the door carefully behind him, and

coming close to Nicodemus said, in a low, horror-stricken voice, "They have resolved upon his death!"

"What!" exclaimed Nicodemus. "Of whom are you speaking?"

"Of Jesus of Nazareth," replied Rabbi Joseph. "You know of the wonder that took place at Bethany to-day?"

"I saw it," answered the old man.

"And you saw its effect upon those present?"

"What could it have been but to make them believe?"

"Unhappily," said Rabbi Joseph, "there are those who will not believe because they think their interest lies in unbelief. There were one or two of this class present at the raising of Lazarus; they brought the report to some of the Pharisees. A secret meeting of the Sanhedrin was hastily summoned. You, unfortunately, were out of town, and were not there to protest; yet if you had been, it would probably not have availed. I said all I could, but it was of no use. Caiaphas, the high-priest, put the matter in such a way as to appeal both to their personal interest and their patriotism, saying that if the Romans heard of the claims of Jesus they would take away the liberties of the people and degrade us, the rulers, from our high places; and then, in his capacity of high-priest, he uttered the prophecy that it was expedient that one man should die for the people rather than that the whole nation should perish. And so they decided to have him put to death at the first opportunity."

There was a blank silence when Rabbi Joseph ceased to speak; both the old rabbi and his young nephew, the boy who loved Jesus so dearly, sat as if stunned. Then suddenly Antipas started up:

“Uncle, we ought to warn him! He ought not to stay in Bethany now.”

Nicodemus raised his head.

“The twelve are with him; it hardly seems possible that he could be taken unawares. Yet you are right, dear boy, he ought to be warned; but whom can we send? Whom can we trust?”

“Have you no confidential servant?” asked Rabbi Joseph.

“More than one,” replied Nicodemus. “But this is no common danger.”

“Uncle,” said Antipas, “let me go! You know you can trust me, and there is no need of telling any one else.”

Nicodemus went to the window and looked out. “It is late, dear boy, and the moon is nearly set, yet if you are not afraid—”

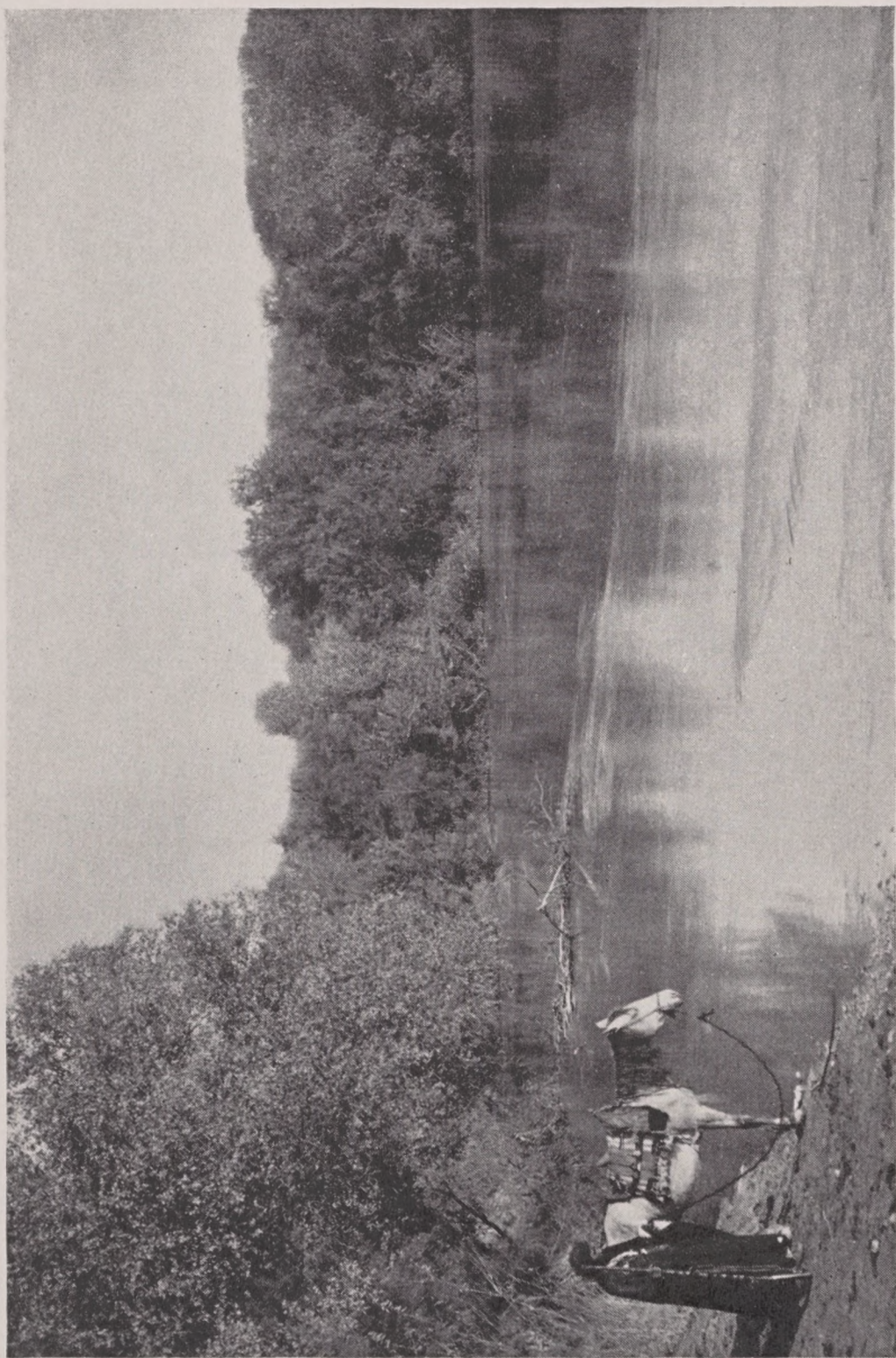
“Uncle, I shall not think of fear; I shall be thinking only of Jesus. Let me go; I can spend the night at Bethany and he can be miles away before morning.”

After some further consultation with Joseph, Nicodemus decided that this was the best plan, and the boy set out, going down into the Tyropæan Valley and across the vale of Kidron and by the steep short cut over the Mount of Olives. He did not notice the darkness, nor how he stumbled over the stones on the rough

hill-path ; his whole heart was occupied with the thought of Jesus.

The way seemed interminably long, yet he found himself at Bethany almost before he knew ; and there he had the joy of his Master's loving smile, his Master's approving words. Without agitation, without haste, almost as if it had always been a part of his plan, after many quiet words of counsel and cheer and encouragement, Jesus bade them all farewell and went away with his disciples. It would not be for long, he told them. He would return for the Sabbath before the Passover.

The twelve disciples had been afraid to have Jesus go to Bethany ; they had all thought, with Thomas, that he might be going to his death. But when they left Bethany for their night journey to some place of hiding they were not afraid. The proof of their Master's power at the grave of Lazarus had set them, for the time at least, above fear, and though they knew that the rulers had resolved to seek his life, they felt sure that nothing could happen to Jesus against his own will or without his full consent. John, the best beloved of all, walked beside his Master along the hill-side paths under the solemn light of the stars. His heart beat high with hope, for he had heard Jesus promise Lazarus that he would return for the Passover, and he felt certain that then his Lord's triumph would come ; then, as he had once said long ago, he would be lifted up and would draw all people to him ; then all the nations in the world would own that he was king indeed. Only a few weeks more !



A FORD OF THE JORDAN.

These few weeks they spent in a little village almost hidden away in the hills of Ephraim. Only the twelve were with Jesus, and these were the sweetest days they had ever known. No eager multitudes, full of wants and woes, absorbing all his time ; no gaping hearers only half understanding his words. He was all theirs—his time all given to their instruction, his life entirely interwoven with theirs. Many a time in his long after life John was sustained through unparalleled sorrows by the memory of these sacred weeks.

John told something of this to Bar-joses when at last they were all together again. After Jesus and the twelve had left the others at Bethany in Perea to go to Bethany in Judea, they had waited patiently, pursuing their several callings, until their Lord should come to them or send for them to join him. Salome the mother of James and John, and Mary the wife of Clopas, had gone back to Capernaum for a time, with Bar-joses to attend them ; but Mary the mother of Jesus, and Mary of Magdala had remained with Ruth and little Janna and Nathan, while Ezra and Obed worked for the support of all. And presently Salome and Mary and Bar-joses returned, bringing the things they had prepared for the comfort of Jesus.

Then the message came from Jesus that they might join him. They went down through the valley of the mountain torrent, Shaib, and crossed the Jordan at the fords near the village Zemaraim, and so by unfrequented paths across the Jordan valley and up the steep hill-sides, till they found him in the little village Ephraim.

Even the children saw a change in him. He was the same dear friend he had always been, just as glad to see them, as ready to put his arm around them or lay his hand upon their shoulder as they stood by his side, as willing to listen to what they had to tell him, as in the happy days beside the lake; and yet there was a difference. Bar-joses had grown beyond being a child; he was sixteen years old now, and his love for his Master, and the earnest thoughts that had been awakened in his mind by his Master's teachings, had made him more serious and mature than most boys of his age; and thinking deeply on this change, it seemed to him that his Master was looking forward to some great event, some crisis in his life. He spoke to John about it, when John was telling him of the blessed weeks they had passed at Ephraim, and John quite agreed with him. Jesus was looking forward to his triumph, the beloved disciple thought; but to Bar-joses it did not seem quite like that. His mind had never dwelt so much as John's upon the triumph that was to come, perhaps because when it came it would make no such difference in his life as it would in John's. He would simply go on being the humble servant of the Master; but John looked forward as a matter of course to holding a high position in the kingdom when the triumph of Jesus came.

Bar-joses was so absorbed in the joy of following Jesus that he hardly noticed it one day when the Master led the twelve apart a little way, as he often did when he wanted to speak with them alone. When he observed

it he busied himself, as he usually did at such times, in going among the women of the company to attend to any wants that they might have. Janna and Nathan were playing happily by themselves, as they often did, and when Bar-joses had performed some little kindly services for the women he looked again for Jesus. He was coming back, walking before the twelve, and as he came across the grass Bar-joses thought again of the time he had seen him coming up the Jordan valley, all radiant with joy and power, walking as if he trod on air. His face was radiant now, but not with joy; he was walking now as if he hardly touched the ground, but not with the elastic step of that earlier time. He seemed lifted above himself, above both joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain; something in his look and step made Bar-joses think of the clouds in the far upper air that reflect the setting sunlight, but are not blown about by the winds that move the trees and flowers.

Bar-joses could not have put this into words, although he felt it; but he was greatly puzzled when he looked from Jesus to the disciples, for some of them were full of grief and some looked bewildered and perplexed. John, who walked close behind his Master, seemed to be in high excitement, and when he saw Bar-joses he caught him by the arm saying:

“Come aside with me a little, Bar-joses, I must tell you. The Master has been telling us that he is going to be delivered to the Gentiles, and mocked and shamefully treated and scourged *and crucified!* What can he mean? That is not possible, surely! They

could not do it! They would not dare! The Son of God!"

Bar-joses stood as if stupefied. He remembered other words the Lord had spoken like these, yet not like these, not horrible like these. What could be their meaning? What hideous parable was this?

"Did he give you no explanation, John, as he has done with his other parables?" he asked.

"He added that after three days he would rise again. I cannot but think that some dreadful ordeal lies before him and before us all, for surely we shall go with him through it all. But it will be short—it must! After three days, he says, he will arise again. And then—I see! He means that in a very short time his triumph will come; he will have conquered not only Jews, but Gentiles! His kingdom will be established over all mankind; Greeks and Romans and Idumæans will be compelled to own him Lord, and then, as the prophets have prophesied, the place of his feet shall be glorious!"

John threw back his head after a manner of his own, his eyes flashed, his cheeks glowed. He had already forgotten the mocking and scourging and crucifying, and thought only of the glory and triumph of the kingdom. He turned and went to his mother, and drew her away from the company of the women, beckoning as he did so to his brother. Bar-joses knew from John's animated gestures that he was sharing with them his new thoughts.

That evening Jesus was resting under the shelter of

a tree, the children near him, when Salome came toward him, followed by her two sons. Bowing to the ground before him as if he were a king, speaking not with the familiar respect of her usual habit, but in formal tones, she begged of him a favor—that her two sons might have the highest offices in his kingdom, sitting one at his right hand and one on his left, to administer its affairs.

Jesus looked from one to the other of the brothers with pitying love, and then said with that vibration in his voice that always showed that he was feeling deeply, “You do not know what you are asking; can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?”

The brothers, remembering what he had said of the shameful ordeal that was before him, and resolute to stand by him through the very worst, answered firmly, “We are able.”

Then Jesus answered, and his voice was full of tenderness, “You shall indeed drink of my cup. But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom my Father has prepared it.”

The other disciples had seen the two coming to Jesus with their mother, had followed them and heard all that was said, and now they began to talk indignantly among themselves of this attempt of the brothers to secure in advance the highest offices in the kingdom. But Jesus called them to sit down near him, and explained to them that in his kingdom the greatest would be the one who was most ready to serve the others.

“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,” he added, “and to give his life a ransom for many.”

And Bar-joses, sitting a little back under the shadow of the tree, rejoiced in his heart that he had the joy of being like his Master in this—that it had been his business to serve them all. But what could that saying mean, “To give his life a ransom for many?”

CHAPTER XXXVI.

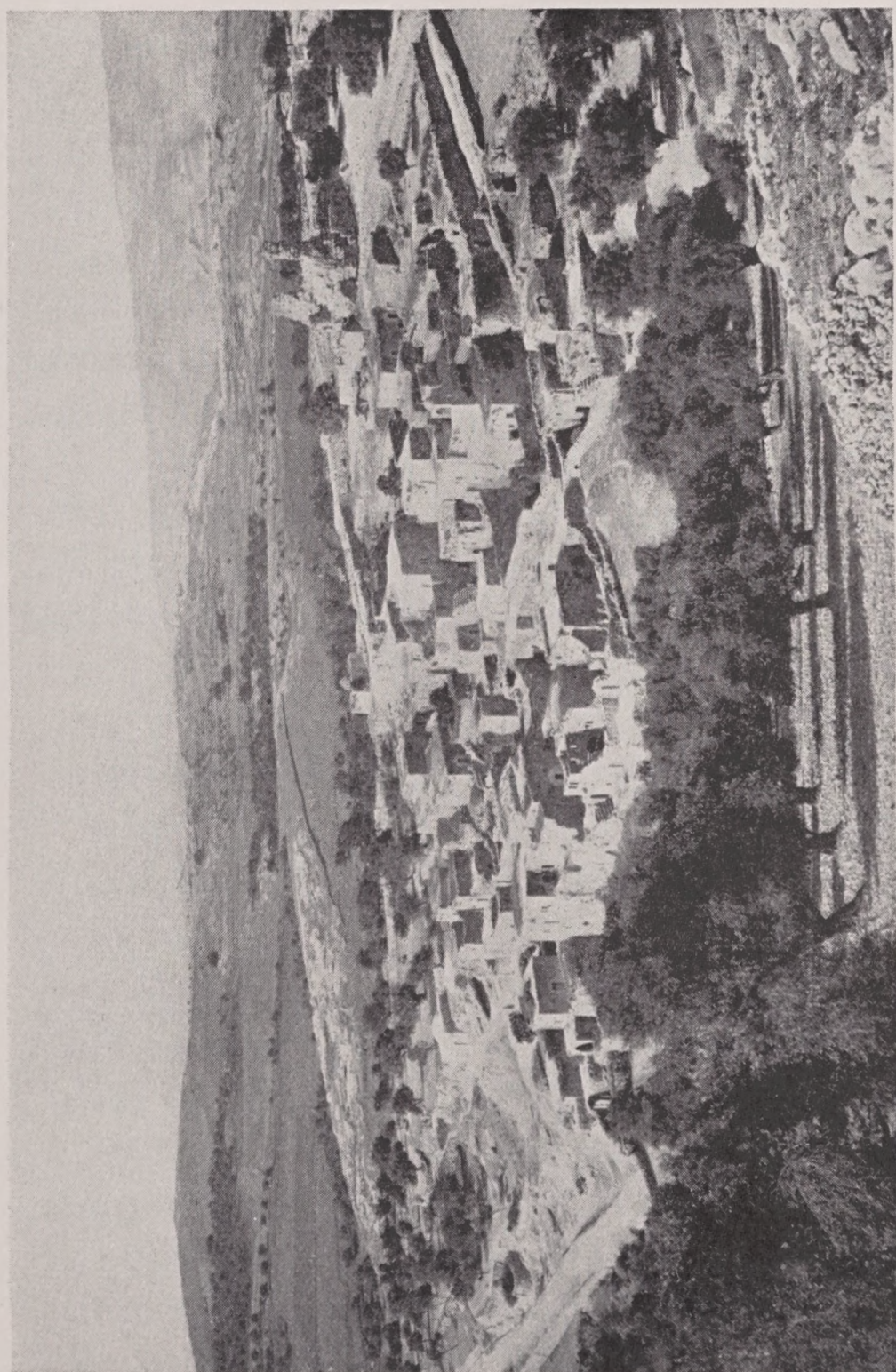
HOW THE LORD ENTERED JERUSALEM IN KINGLY STATE.

THEY set out the next day for Jerusalem, going not directly but by the great highroad that led to Jericho. Skirting that beautiful city, "the Paradise of God," as the Jews loved to call it, they came toward evening to a meeting of the ways toward which two caravans of Passover pilgrims were approaching, one by way of Perea and the fords of the Jordan, the other by the shorter but uncomfortably hot route along the Jordan valley. It was still a week before the Passover, and these companies were composed of the more devout Jews. Nearly all devout Jews by this time believed on Jesus, and to the great joy not only of the twelve disciples, but of Jesus' mother and women friends and also of the children, Jesus at once took his position at the head of this great caravan as it moved on toward Jericho, where the night would be passed. The whole company was transported with delight; now, at last, they believed that the kingdom would be proclaimed. They were ready now, seeing the time was so near, to let him have his own way as to how he would proclaim. It was with a sort of awe, Bar-joses observed, that the vanguard permitted a little distance to be made between the caravan and Jesus and his friends; and

thus attended the Master went solemnly before the multitude to meet the people of Jericho, who, according to custom, came forth to greet the festal company with glad acclamations.

It gave a shock of disappointment and bewilderment to the pilgrims when Jesus asked for a night's hospitality with the chief tax-gatherer, the despised and bated Zacchæus, instead of going home with one of the principal rabbis or some notable person of the city. Zacchæus had repented at the preaching of the Baptist and was living in the practice of good works, but the Scribes and Pharisees liked him none the better for that. To Bar-joses, however, and John and the mother of Jesus, it seemed most natural that Jesus should prefer to spend the night with a true disciple, and Zacchæus was probably of all the believers who lived in Jericho best able to give hospitality to so large a party.

If the pilgrims had felt a little shocked by this action, they recovered all their enthusiasm the next morning when, on going out of the city, Jesus restored sight to two blind beggars. And then, as they went along the highway from Jericho to Jerusalem, Jesus told a parable which applied closely to his disciples and dear friends, as they saw. It was of servants left by their lord in charge of his goods while he went into a far country to recover a kingdom and to return, and how all the servants but one made much of their opportunities and did good service, but that one wasted his opportunity and gained nothing for his lord; and how on his return the lord rewarded them who had done well by giving



BETHANY.

them still greater service to perform, and punished him who had done ill by forbidding him to serve any more.

Those who knew Jesus best had often heard him speak as if the greatest privilege of his kingdom would be the opportunity to serve others, but this parable made them understand better than before that service was the very law of the kingdom, and the children, who liked nothing better than to be permitted to help the older folk, thought it a beautiful law, and understood the parable far better than the disciples and other hearers did. And when Jesus had told this parable he went forward before the disciples, with his face set toward Jerusalem, and there was on his countenance such an expression of high resolve and of heavenly thought, as if he were actually holding converse with God, that even John, his dearest and most intimate friend, drew back and followed at a little distance.

The Sabbath lamps were being kindled in the houses as they came to Bethany. And there Lazarus and his sisters received Jesus and his mother and women friends into their house, and the disciples and other followers made fresh booths for themselves upon the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, in which to pass the Sabbath.

The next evening, when the Sabbath sun had set, the twelve were invited to a feast in honor of Jesus, and Nicodemus and Antipas were also there. It was in the house they knew so well, where they had often visited Lazarus and his sisters, but Antipas saw with surprise that it was not Lazarus who sat in the seat of host, but an old man; and he heard those about him

whispering that it was the father of the family, Simon the leper, who had been healed by Jesus, and had come home after long years of living in a tomb in the valley.

The feast was ended ; the younger children, who after the custom of the time had been standing in the corners of the room looking on, had gone to rest ; but the guests were still reclining on the couches in conversation, when Bar-joses, who lingered in the court, saw Mary of Bethany go into another room and return with an alabaster vase in her hands. Her face was glowing with deep emotion as she came up behind where Jesus reclined, in the seat of honor next her father. Holding the fragile vase above his head, she crushed it in her hands, and the air was filled with fragrance as the costly spikenard flowed down over his long hair. It was the highest honor she could pay him, the richest expression of her gratitude and love.

There was a stir of surprise among the guests, and one of the disciples exclaimed, " What is the use of this waste ? Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor ? "

Astonished beyond measure that any one could think it a waste to pay honor to the Master, Bar-joses looked to see who it was that spoke. It was Judas of Kerioth, the dark-browed Judean Apostle. The boy wondered at the zeal of Judas for the poor ; if it had been put to him which of the twelve was least considerate of others, he would have answered, Judas of Kerioth ; and while he wondered it flashed across him that Judas was the

treasurer and carried the common purse of Jesus and the twelve.

But Jesus was speaking, and all thought of Judas vanished from Bar-joses's mind as his Master said, "She has wrought a good work in me, let her keep it against the day of my burying; for you have the poor with you always, but me you have not always."

"Against his burying!" Bar-joses staggered out of the lighted room and up the hillside to the booth where the children slept. As he threw himself down upon the grass great sobs shook him; it seemed as if his heart was bursting. Little Janna, who was lying cuddled up against Nathan, turned over and put out his hand.

"Are you hurt, Bar-joses?" he asked sleepily. "Jesus'll make it well," and he dropped off to sleep again. And the memory of what Jesus had been to him all these years stole into the boy's heart with sweetest solace, fragrant as the odor of the spikenard. Not even death, not even burying, could rob him of the friend who was, he knew, the very Lord of Life.

The next morning the little village was crowded with people who had heard that Jesus was there. Antipas came back, of course, and with him Mark. It seemed to Antipas that he should never be tired of looking at Jesus, of sitting where he could hear his voice.

But as one group of people after another came into the room, some to talk with Jesus and some to stare at Lazarus, whom they considered as great a wonder in his way, Antipas slipped out and went to find Bar-joses, with whom he could talk of Jesus to his heart's content.

Antipas had also much to tell Bar-joses, especially about that other visit of Jesus to Bethany, and the determination of the Sanhedrin to have him put to death. He was somewhat surprised at the way Bar-joses took this dreadful news—it seemed to fit in with something already in his mind, Antipas could not quite understand what. But he told Bar-joses that his uncle thought that Jesus was perfectly safe during the feast-time—the rulers would not dare do anything while such multitudes were there from Galilee and Perea, who knew Jesus so well and believed in him so enthusiastically.

At last there was a stir in the house and Jesus came out with his disciples and turned his face toward Jerusalem. All his friends and followers joined him, the boys among them, and the villagers followed after. It was not long before the boys noticed that Peter and James had left the Master's side and were hastening to a hamlet a little off the road. They soon reappeared, leading a nearly full-grown donkey colt. Bringing the colt up to Jesus, they threw over it their outer garments and, seating him upon it, the other disciples took off their mantles and spread them upon the road for the colt to walk upon.

All the hillside was dotted with tents and booths of Passover pilgrims who had come up from Jericho in Jesus' train, and who were eagerly awaiting the moment when he should proclaim himself the Messiah of Israel. These were devout Jews who knew the prophets well, and seeing Jesus seated thus upon the colt, they remembered a saying of Zechariah which prophesied that the

Messiah would come to Jerusalem riding an ass's colt. They saw that this act was Jesus' way of proclaiming that he was the Messiah, and with one accord they raised the cry "Hosanna to the Son of David!" At that moment around the shoulder of the hill appeared a procession of Passover pilgrims coming out from Jerusalem, bearing palm branches in token of honor, and at the sight of this festal welcome, which seemed like the beginning of the triumph for which they hoped, the disciples also joined in the cry of "Hosanna!" which was echoing from all the hillside. The multitudes in both processions were seized with strong enthusiasm and they too broke forth in acclamations, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" answering to one another, "Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest!" While the disciples, who knew something of the nature of the kingdom, shouted, "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Above all the shouts rose the exultant cry of the children, of little Janna and Nathan, of Antipas and Bar-joses and Mark, "Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest!"

So the cry went forward, rolling from lip to lip of the great multitude and rousing them to greater enthusiasm. They tore off their mantles to spread them in the way; they broke off branches from the trees, and with them carpeted the path, and ever the cry gained greater volume, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Amid the throng there were Pharisees who had come

out to see what would be done ; and Bar-joses, who in this moment of rapture still kept near his Master, heard them remonstrating with Jesus for permitting such acclamations, and Jesus answering, "I tell you that if they hold their peace the stones will cry out !" And then he saw the rabbis turn angrily to one another, whispering, "Do you see that you are making no progress ? The whole world is gone after him !" And with unutterable joy Bar-joses believed that at last the whole world was indeed ready to own him Lord.

But now they had turned the corner of the hill where suddenly, without a moment's warning, the magnificent vision of Jerusalem bursts upon the eye. Bar-joses, who had never seen it before, was rooted to the spot with rapture. There it was, the City of the Great King ; its stately hills, its palm and olive shaded valleys, its marble palaces, its soaring towers, and its glorious temple rising clear against the deep blue sky, terrace above terrace, in all its splendor of marble and gold. But while the boy gazed in ecstasy suddenly the sound of agonized weeping came to his ears, and the voice he loved above all others exclaimed in tones of piercing sorrow, "If thou hadst known in this day—even thou—the things which belong unto peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes !" The boy's heart was ready to break with sympathy in his Master's grief ; but why, oh why, this agony of sorrow in this hour of triumph ? Bar-joses was too deep in grieved perplexity to see the bewildered looks the disciples exchanged with one another.

The procession moved on ; the cries of "Hosanna !"

had not been checked by the agony of sorrow of which only those nearest Jesus had known, and they broke forth again with new ecstasy as the multitude caught the inspiring sight of Jerusalem. Down the hillside, into the valley, and through the city gates and up the winding streets to the temple mount the long procession swept, with its cries of "Hosanna." The whole city was stirred. Some cried, "Who is he?" and the shout went up from the multitude, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee!" But Bar-joses and Antipas and all the children wondered that they did not say, "This is our Messiah, our King, our God!" For that was what they knew him to be.

At the temple gate Jesus descended from the colt; the evening sacrifice was going on, and quiet fell upon the people. And as night drew on he quietly turned and went back to Bethany alone with his own faithful friends.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

HOW JUDAS OF KERIOTH LOOKED DARKLY ON HIS LORD.

FOR the next few days the children saw little of Jesus. He was entirely occupied through the day in teaching in the temple or talking with the rabbis and the priests, and at night he went out to Bethany, where he devoted himself especially to the twelve. Antipas obtained leave of his uncle to have Bar-joses with him, for the friendship which had grown up between the two boys in the happy days in Galilee had too strong a bond in their love for Jesus to have been weakened by a year of separation. Ezra and Ruth, with Janna, had found a lodging with friends in the city, and Obed and Nathan were still camping in their booth on the hillside. From time to time the children met, as Bar-joses was exploring the city under the guidance of Antipas and Mark. Sometimes they met in the temple, and one day Jesus came into the Court of the Women where they were. At once Janna raised the cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Nathan took it up, and the elder boys followed, and the other children there, boys who had come with their parents to the temple for the first time, joined in the cry, till all the courts of the Lord's house rang with the children's glad shouts of praise.

Some of the chief priests and rabbis indignantly appealed to Jesus to stop them. To have attempted themselves to stop them was more than they dared do, for they greatly feared that the people would break out in open revolt if they said anything against the claims of Jesus. But Jesus smiled over at the children—they remembered it afterward in the dreadful moment when they next saw him smile—and answered, quoting one of the Psalms, “Did you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise’?” And so the children shouted on until Jesus went out of the temple to return to Bethany.

Sometimes the boys lingered in the outskirts of the crowd that gathered around Jesus as he taught, and heard the parables with which he plainly showed the rulers that he was the Messiah and what was the nature of his kingdom, or warned them against the awful danger of refusing him. Sometimes they heard him arguing with them.

Mark and Antipas, who were more familiar with the secret purposes of the priests and Scribes than Bar-joses was, thought sometimes that the rulers were trying to entrap him into giving them some pretext for accusing him before the Roman governor; but if so, they failed, for he always answered them in such a way that they were filled with confusion. Once they heard him utter very awful woes against the Scribes and Pharisees, calling them hypocrites, and once they heard him mourn over Jerusalem in words of heart-breaking tenderness. Once they heard him speak kindly of a poor widow who

had put less than half a cent into the treasury, saying that she had put in more than they all with their rich gifts; and Bar-joses, who had seen him feed five thousand men with the little store of food that he himself had brought as an offering to his dear Master, well understood how true it was that the gift of love might be made incomparably valuable by the Master's blessing. And once they heard him cry aloud so that all could hear, "He that believeth in me believeth not in me, but in Him that sent me. And he that beholdeth me beholdeth Him that sent me. I am come a light into the world that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in darkness. . . . Even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak!"

One thing Bar-joses noticed—he said nothing about it even to Antipas, though he thought about it much—whenever he saw the twelve surrounding Jesus, he observed that the face of Judas of Kerioth was turned away from him, and that it was dark and lowering. And one evening he was startled to hear Nicodemus say, "I met one of the Master's disciples going into the high-priest's house to-day as I came out. I can hardly think what he could have to do there."

Then Bar-joses thought it might be well to tell the good rabbi what he had observed of Judas, and Nicodemus meditated long and painfully on what Bar-joses told him. But finally he said, "I cannot think there can be any meaning in it, not immediately at least, for this very day at a meeting of the Council it was decided to do nothing against Jesus during the festival week,

for fear of making an uprising among the people. And besides, my boy, I cannot think it possible that one who has lived all this time in daily companionship with our Lord can do aught but love him. He could not wish to do him harm." And Bar-joses felt sure that he could not.

But the next morning the boy met Peter and John in the street, and they told him that the twelve had spent the whole of the previous day alone with the Master, and that he had told them of dreadful tribulations that were before them, and that he was to leave them for a while, but that he would come back suddenly, at some time when they did not expect him, and their reward would be glorious. They would not mind the tribulations, John said, for the sake of the glorious end. But Jesus had again repeated those shocking words about being crucified. And now he had sent them out secretly to a place that they themselves did not yet know, with a sign by which to find it, to prepare for the Passover, as if he knew that danger was very near.

Bar-joses went home with a weight of dread upon his heart.

Just before evening Mark came to see Antipas and Bar-joses, and told them that Jesus and the twelve had already assembled to take the Passover by themselves in the guest chamber of his mother's house.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

HOW MARK SAW THE BETRAYAL OF THE LORD.

JOHN had listened to his Lord's warnings of sorrow and promises of future glory with heart divided between anguish and exultation. The fiery, impetuous boy of eighteen, whose whole heart had gone forth in a blaze of love the first day he ever saw Jesus, had become now a man of twenty-one, young still, and still impetuous and fiery, but maturing fast through the deep love that had taken possession of his whole being, subduing the leaping flames of his passions into a steady glow, and transferring headlong impetuosity into burning zeal. Loving his Master as he did, he trusted him thoroughly, believed in him absolutely, was willing to suffer for him whatever he might ask, but still had not for a moment thought anything other than that the kingdom must be one of external rule as well as internal obedience. His Lord's teachings confused and subdued him, but did not make him see the future in any other light. And so it was with Peter, who, though ten years older than John and differing from him in many respects, was most like him in the love he bore his Lord.

Now they were gathered at supper in the upper chamber. Notwithstanding the intense solemnity of the moment, when to each one it seemed as if the crisis must

soon come, the disciples had entered the room in sharp contention as to who should be greatest in the kingdom soon to be proclaimed. With the unfailing patience of all the years they had been together Jesus had reminded them that the greatest was he who served others most ; and rising from the table, he had laid aside his upper garment and girded himself with a towel like a servant, and had poured water into a basin and washed the feet of them all. Then, the lesson taught, he had reclined among them, John with his head upon his Master's breast, Judas on the Master's other side, Peter opposite John, and the rest as they liked best ; and so they had eaten the paschal feast. And John had been more blissfully happy than words could say, lying there next his Lord, till in the midst of the feast the Master had grown very sad and had said that one of them would betray him. To John it came like a thunderclap—it was impossible, it could not be true ! And the Lord by a sign had shown him that the betrayer was Judas ; and when the supper was ended he had permitted Judas to go away—no one but John knew why.

But he soon forgot all about Judas. For now the Lord, with simple, loving words, gave to them bread and wine as symbols of his body and blood, and bade them do in this manner always in memory of him. And then he talked with them far into the night. He was going away, but not to leave them alone. He would send the Holy Spirit to be always with them, bringing to their remembrance all that he had taught them. And they were not to feel that they were

separated from him, but to abide in him as closely and be as really joined to him as the branch is to the vine. And his peace was to be always with them. In the world they would have tribulation, but they must be of good cheer, for he had overcome the world.

Then he lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed, asking the Father to glorify him, asking that they might be sanctified in the truth and perfected into one with him and with the Father, and that they might be with him to behold his eternal glory.

And then, the hours having gone on far into the night; they sang the Passover hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives, to a garden where Jesus always loved to go with them—the Garden of Gethsemane.

Late that night a message came from the high-priest to Nicodemus, summoning him to attend a meeting of the Council.

A little later, while Bar-joses and Antipas, made anxious by the summons of Nicodemus, were talking together before lying down again to sleep, they heard voices at the entrance, then hasty steps, and Mark rushed in, in a paroxysm of grief, and throwing himself upon the divan said between sobs and tears that Jesus had been arrested.

They were stunned. After all these days of anxiety it came upon them as if they had never thought of danger. They sat rigid, looking at Mark's tears without the power to weep or make a sign. At last Bar-joses said huskily, "How?"—his parched lips would say no more.

And Mark told how, long after the house was still and he had gone to bed, he heard a noise, and looking out, there were men and temple officers with torches and swords and staves, and Judas at their head, and when they asked for Jesus and were told that he had left the house they went away. And he had risen and hastily cast on his abbas and hurried after, and followed them to the garden on Olivet, Gethsemane; and there Jesus had come forth to them with his disciples, and Judas had gone up and kissed him, and by that dastard deed had made him known to the officers.

“Oh!” he exclaimed with sudden fury, “I hope his very soul was burned with remorse when the Master said to him, ‘Judas, do you betray the Son of man with a kiss?’”

Mark burst into a sobbing cry, and the other two sat speechless. At last Antipas said, in a trembling voice, “And what then, Mark?”

“Why, then,” said Mark, “it seemed as if the whole rabble felt the awe of Jesus; they staggered, and many of them fell on the ground. But Jesus stood waiting, and presently they got up and he gave himself up to them. But first he made them promise to let his disciples go, and Peter drew a sword and cut off the ear of one of them; and Jesus bade him put away his sword, for he would drink the cup his Father had given him. And then,” said Mark, with another burst of tears, “he asked them—oh, so gently and courteously—to release him a moment, and they obeyed as if he were their Master, not their prisoner, and he touched the man’s

ear and healed it. And then they led him away, and I did not see what became of the disciples, for one of the officers saw me and chased me and caught me by the abbas. I could only get away by leaving it in his hand. But I ran to Obed's booth on the hillside and he gave me an abbas to wrap me in, and then I came here."

There was no sleep for the boys that night. Shivering and weeping and sometimes praying, they waited for Nicodemus to come home from the Council.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

HOW THE CHILDREN LOVED THEIR LORD UNTIL THE END.

BUT Nicodemus did not come. The hours passed on and still he did not come. The Passover moon went down and the spring sun was peeping above the Mount of Olives when they heard the trampling of many footsteps and the subdued roar of many voices, and they hastened to look out. They were bringing Jesus to the governor's palace.

They could not stay another moment. In agony of heart they rushed out, hardly noticing that Nicodemus passed them in the court, pale, haggard, with a look of anguish on his face.

In the outer court of Pilate's palace stood the members of the Council—all but Nicodemus and Rabbi Joseph. Neither law-abiding Pharisees nor mocking Sadducees would enter a heathen's house on this festival day for fear of being defiled; but the boys knew there was no defilement where Jesus was, and they pressed in and stood among the mob, the rabble of Jerusalem. No Passover pilgrims here, none of those who had so often hung upon his words and been healed by his touch; only the off-scouring of a great city's streets. On the

steps of the Prætorium stood Pilate and Jesus beside him.

They had never loved him as they loved him now, pale, haggard, weary, but divinely patient and sweet and strong. There for a long time he stood while Pilate argued with the priests and then conversed with Jesus, and at last declared that there was no fault in him, and, when the rulers still clamored for his death, got rid of it all by sending him to Herod, who was then in Jerusalem. Into Herod's palace the chief priests followed him; it was not a heathen house. The boys, who had followed too with anguish of heart, could see that he stood majestically silent while the rulers vehemently accused him.

Herod questioned him, but Jesus answered nothing; but for the example of his royal calmness it seemed to the three boys that they should have gone mad with rage when at last Herod handed him over to his soldiers and they jeered at him and set him at naught and scornfully arrayed him in a gorgeous robe.

Back again to Pilate, the crowd trooping after, and amongst them three boys with bursting hearts.

And there, while Pilate tried to set him free, the priests and Scribes were moving among the mob whispering that when the governor asked them to what prisoner he should accord the usual freedom in honor of the Passover festival, they must be sure to shout loudly for Barabbas, the bandit, and not for Jesus. And presently two prisoners were placed together upon the Prætorium steps, Barabbas, the rebel and murderer with his dark,



255. Jérusalem. Ruelle allant au palais d'Hérode

Bony

THE WAY TO HEROD'S PALACE.

bad face, and Jesus, looking more divine than ever in his majestic suffering; and the mob cried out, "Not that man! Away with that man; give us Barabbas, Barabbas!"

Then with awful roar began a cry, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" It seemed to the boys that as Pilate stood there, pale and trembling, washing his hands in water to show that he was innocent of Jesus' blood, while Jesus looked on, calm and self-possessed—it seemed to them that Jesus looked like the ruler and Pilate like a pitiful, cringing slave. But now Jesus was given over to the soldiers, and the boys waited, clinging to one another in agony, knowing of the cruel scourging that their dear Master was undergoing at the hands of those brutal soldiers. And, after a time that they felt to be an age, he was led out again, pale and trembling and bleeding, with a crown of thorns upon his brow; yet still most serene, most kingly. Oh, would not those wicked priests be satisfied with this, would they not let him go? For again Pilate was trying to release him. "I bring him out that you may know that I find no crime in him," he said. But the roar grew more threatening, "Crucify him!" and at last they had their will. Pilate gave him up to be crucified.

The three boys would not, could not, go to Golgotha to see the awful deed; but they placed themselves in the way where he must pass, that he might see at least in their faces the look of love that he had so often loved to meet. And with them stood Nathan and little Janna; and as he went by, staggering, almost fainting

under the heavy cross-bar of his cross, he looked on them and smiled. And they remembered how he had smiled upon them in the temple when they shouted "Hosanna !"

They went home with Mark, and in the upper chamber, where he had eaten the Passover and prayed, they knelt and prayed and gave themselves to him for life or death.

The disciples had forsaken him and fled when he was led away from Gethsemane—even John, his beloved disciple, and Peter, the rock on whose loyal strength he had loved to lean. But these two soon gathered heart and followed him to the high-priest's palace and heard the sneering questions, the cruel mockings, the dastardly insults that the priests and the rabbis heaped upon the Lord. And Peter cowardly denied that he knew him ; and then when his Lord turned and looked at him his heart broke with repentance and he went out and wept bitterly.

John had gone away, but not for long. At early dawn he was at Bethany breaking the dreadful news to Jesus' mother, and supporting her fainting steps along that road to Jerusalem over which five days before her adored son had ridden amid loud hosannas. And now he led her to the place where they were crucifying him. Mary of Magdala and Salome, and Mary, the mother of James the Little, followed them.

They sat beside the cross and suffered with him ; it

was their only way of serving him now. Ah, never before was John so sure that Jesus was the Messiah and Lord of all. And presently the Master looked on them with the words, "Woman, behold thy son! Behold thy mother!" To his mother he gave the last look of love, the love that had never failed, and to his beloved disciple the last look of command, more precious than any other gift, the opportunity to serve; and without waiting for the end, while a mysterious darkness was rolling over the daylight, John took the mother of Jesus away, to be his precious charge for the rest of her life.

In the house of Mark the children saw the darkness coming at noon-day. They did not mind. Their hearts were with Jesus in his agony.

At three o'clock there was an earthquake, and the darkness rolled away, and then they knew that he was dead.

When Antipas and Bar-joses went home they met Nicodemus coming out—a bent and worn old man, yet with a firm look about his mouth that Antipas had never noticed before. With him was Joseph. "We are going to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus," he said, and later the boys were told that the precious body had been laid in Joseph's new tomb.

And then the silver trumpets sounded and the lamps were lit and the Sabbath drew on.

That Sabbath these children whom Jesus loved spent in thought of him, recalling to mind every precious

word that he had spoken, everything he had done for them, and if at any time they could remember any little service they had done for him, then for a moment they were happy.

It was early Sunday morning and Antipas was still sleeping for sorrow and weariness when quick steps came running to his door. Bar-joses stood before him radiant, almost transfigured. "The Lord has risen," he said.

"Risen!" To these children it was not a thing hard to believe. They remembered now that he had said so: "After three days I will rise again." Why should he not do all that he had said?

They ran to Nicodemus with the news, but he could not believe it. They believed it none the less. They ran to Mark, and met him running to them, for Peter had told him, and Mark, too, found it not difficult to believe. And then they ran to tell Obed and Nathan and Ezra and Ruth and Janna. And while the parents believed not for joy, the children rejoiced to believe; it was nothing more than they knew Jesus could do.

Perhaps it was the Lord's way of rewarding their faith by showing that he knew it, that they did not see him then. The disciples, who found it hard to believe, saw him once and again. The women saw him, some of the Jerusalem disciples saw him, but not the children. Yet they were always happy, knowing that he was alive and that he trusted them.

At last the message came to all of them: "The Mas-

ter calls you to a certain place." They had long before this gone to their homes in Galilee—Bar-joses and Antipas, Nathan and Janna and all the twelve, except Judas, who had killed himself in a horror of remorse. And Nicodemus was there, in the house of Chuza and Joanna, and Mark and his parents at the house of Zebedee, for Jesus had promised to see them in Galilee. To them and to little Tabitha and her father and mother and to many others the summons came, "The Lord calls for you."

So they went out to a lonely mountain to see him, a great company, more than five hundred, who loved the Lord with all their hearts. And there at last the children looked into his eyes and heard his voice, and once more he smiled on them. And that smile rested on their hearts as long as they lived, and made labor and friendship and sorrow and joy and life and death and the world and all things glorious, because all things reflected his smile.

Then forty days after he had risen from the dead those dearest to him were all in Jerusalem again; for he had said he would be there. And gathering together in the upper chamber in Mark's mother's house, he opened their minds so that they understood just how he was the Messiah, the King, not only of Israel, but of the world; and that his kingdom was already in the world, and they were its members, and it was for them to bring all other men to enter it. And then he led them out upon the Mount of Olives. And while they were all gathered around him, he lifted up his hands and blessed them;

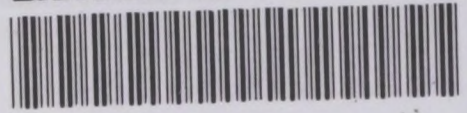
and as the words of blessing sank into their hearts he was parted from them and was carried into heaven. Then they worshipped and their hearts were filled with joy, partly because he had left them work to do for him, but most of all because he had loved them and would love them eternally

THE END.





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